

Saturday August 3 1996

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NEWSPAPER OF THE YEAR 46,622

## Olympics

### Is Michael Johnson the greatest?

Sport page 12



## Outlook

### Now we're watching Big Brother

Plus Ian Botham's moustache

## Context

### Storming the pavilion of prejudice

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# Major falls at the first hurdle

## Sports pledge dashed by 'catastrophic' cuts

James Melke  
Community Affairs Editor

**J**ohn Major's promise to transform Britain's poor Olympic record was shattered last night as it emerged that government cuts threatened the future of thousands

of sports coaching courses because they were not linked to traditional paid jobs. State funding will be withdrawn from programmes preparing people for "leisure time occupations" unless they can prove they are relevant for employment. Sports bodies warned of "catastrophic" consequences from proposals that under-

mined state-aided training of volunteers, the backbone of the national coaching system. Lloyd Readhead, assistant technical director of the British Amateur Gymnastics Association, for which three-quarters of coaches are part-time, said: "If you don't have quality coaches, you don't have quality athletes." The outcry comes days after Mr Major promised a £200 million annual Raising the Game programme — with most of the money coming from the National Lottery — to improve the nation's sporting prospects. The Sports Council this

week promised a £30 million package aimed at top athletes so that the Atlanta games "are the last major international games at which they will have to struggle for financial support." Improvements to coaching arrangements will be among the demands from the British Olympic Association when they explain the disappointing medal haul from the present games to ministers next week. So far, Britain has won one gold, five silvers and six bronzes. The Sports Council, a quango answerable to the De-

partment for National Heritage, meets many of the costs of coaching athletes through grants to sports governing bodies, but the training of coaches is funded through the Further Education Funding Council, answerable to Gillian Shephard, the Education and Employment Secretary. This has been affected by plans to tighten the rules of government funding for all vocational courses, which are persistently under attack for questionable standards and relevance. Sports bodies say that, even where they can win funding for job-related train-

ing, they will be subject to more bureaucracy and auditing checks than the colleges with which they have made franchise deals. A letter from an official in Mrs Shephard's department, Jane Benham, to the Central Council of Physical Recreation (CCPR), the umbrella sports organisation, said: "While this department does support the measures and policies in Raising the Game, I have to say that our support... for it does not include the assumption that funds made available for the further edu-

cation sector via the Further Education Funding Council should be available to help sport governing bodies ensure an increased number of qualified coaches — many of whom, if I understand the position, are volunteers." Mrs Benham suggested other routes were available but Chris Earle, technical director of the CCPR, said grants to sport had been cut significantly in recent years. However, the further education money had "allowed them to make their education and training programmes accessible to a greater number

of people and to ensure the quality of coaches and leaders in the community." In many sports, 90 per cent of coaches were volunteers, although some were paid. "Sport relies on volunteers and it relies on professional training for those volunteers. People can't afford to be full-time coaches," he said. Mrs Shephard's department tried to defuse the row. A spokesman insisted: "A good vocational qualification has nothing to fear." The Further Education Funding Council welcomed the review but said it was not an attack on sport.

## Labour fights on the beaches for the browned off voter

David Hencke  
Westminster Correspondent

**L**ABOUR'S secret summer weapons to woo cynical and sun-tanned young people from the clutches of "lying Tories" were revealed yesterday — free sunglasses, a mini frisbee, a stick of rock and a whirly hat. From the sunny sands of Blackpool to the midlats of Gravesend, via the less traditional holiday hot spots of Birmingham, Glasgow and Halifax, the latest gimmick to wake up a bored electorate was unleashed yesterday. Next week, Labour attempts to recruit the "lager lout" vote when large consignments of balloons, whirly hats and stick-on badges are pressed into the hands of frazzled British holidaymakers in Benidorm, Majorca, Ibiza and Malaga. For the more refined sunseeker in Alhambra, Menorca and Alicante, free Labour leaflets can be clipped into a bulging Filofax to help insignias survive the afternoon siesta. The latest appeal to Britain's youth was launched somewhat apologetically by three middle-aged politicians — deputy leader John



Labour's deputy leader John Prescott enters the holiday spirit at yesterday's press conference

Prescott, white-bearded Frank Dobson and a suitably suntanned Mo Mowlam — at a London press conference. Ms Mowlam, who emphasised that the £500,000 campaign was aimed at ending cynicism bred by the Tories among the young, said: "There is nothing I can do about being middle-aged."

while Mr Prescott made it clear that in any beach bathing contest "people are free to choose between Mr Motivator and me."

Later, it emerged from Labour Party headquarters that Mr Prescott will not be going near any beaches wearing a whirly hat or brandishing sticks of rock full of E numbers and

marked Tory Lies from end to end. Instead, his only campaigning brief will be talking to expatriates attending the American Democrat Convention. Labour's promise to put up posters along the Costa denouncing the Tories £10 million "lies" campaign looked yesterday to be as

successful as Neil Kinnock's infamous appearance on Brighton beach, where he fell into the sea. No dates and no sites were available from Labour's headquarters. Indeed, the only evidence of overseas activity was a full-page advert in the Benidorm edition of the Sun. Labour's final apology

## War criminal in legal mire

John Hooper in Rome

**T**HE case of the former Nazi Erich Priebke, who was accused of a leading role in Italy's worst wartime atrocity, was freed by a military court in Rome on Thursday. He was re-arrested in the early hours of yesterday pending an application from Germany for his extradition. Prosecutors in Dortmund have already issued a warrant for his arrest at the request of the Simon Westenthal Centre. However, Germany is handicapped because the order for Mr Priebke's extradition from Argentina to Italy last November forbade his being sent to a third country. Argentina could have circumvented the problem by agreeing to the request for extradition that Germany submitted at the same time as Italy, but which has never

been answered. But yesterday the Argentinian foreign minister, Guido di Tella, said his government could no longer consider the demand because it had withdrawn Mr Priebke's resident's permit. The case could be the subject of an appeal in Rome by the prosecution, which would also block extradition. Mr Priebke's Argentinian lawyer said extradition could be fought on the grounds that his client had already been tried, and that his alleged crime had not been committed in Germany. Mr Priebke was dispatched after his re-arrest to the Regina Coeli prison, in which many of his victims spent their last night alive, more than half a century ago. The German admitted taking part in the reprisal killings of 335 men and boys. He was put in solitary confinement for his own protection. The Argentinian authorities announced that, on the orders of President Carlos Menem, Mr Priebke would not be allowed back into the country where he lived for 45 years.

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## 'Gun law' cuts crime rate, US study finds

### Survey boosts lobby for right to carry concealed weapons

Ian Katz in New York

**A**LLOWING people to carry concealed firearms helps reduce violent crime, according to a study that will dismay United States gun control campaigners. The comprehensive study by the University of Chicago found that major crimes such as murder, rape and assault fell dramatically in states which have legalised the carrying of concealed handguns.

The findings will add momentum to a movement that has already seen a rise to 31 in the number of states with a "concealed carry" law. Gun advocates insist the right to carry hidden firearms deters criminals because they never know if they will face the muzzle of a gun. The report, to be released next week, for the first time analyses crime statistics for all 3,054 US counties, between 1977 and 1992. In states with the law, murders were down, on average,

by 8.5 per cent. Rapes were down 5 per cent and serious assaults by 7 per cent. Gun control advocates have long insisted that the law increases accidental and impulsive shootings. But Professor John Lott, the author of the study, said he found no evidence of an increase in accidental killings or suicides. "Total deaths unambiguously fall by a large amount," he told the Guardian. "If people are interested in saving lives, they are going to have to allow people to carry concealed handguns." Other studies have differed on the impact of such legislation. One study of five cities last year found the murder

rate increased in three, and fell in only one. But Prof Lott insists his is the first to examine crime figures across the country — adjusted to take into account a general fall in crime. In cities with populations above 250,000, Prof Lott found murder rates dropped after the law by on average 13.5 per cent. The most dramatic falls in murder rates came in areas where the number of women carrying firearms was high. "For every woman that carries a concealed handgun, the murder rate fell by three to four times more than it would if another man had carried a concealed gun."

Prof Lott said the fall in crime did not result from people using guns but from potential criminals trying to avoid confronting them. Property crimes, such as car theft and stealing, increased in states with the law, apparently because criminals switched to lower-risk offences. Tom Wylly, a spokesman for the National Rifle Association, welcomed the findings. "We've always said that 'right to carry' correlates to public safety and this study confirms not only that it correlates but also that it contributes to it."

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# Hogg on the rack for mad calf cover-up

Stephen Bates in Brussels

**P**RESSURE was mounting on Douglas Hogg, the Agriculture Secretary, last night to explain why the Government suppressed scientific evidence that cows can pass BSE to their calves for nearly a fortnight, until after a Commons debate on its handling of the crisis.

There were claims that the Government's reluctance to publish the report will lead to a further three-month hiatus in the introduction of its selective slaughtering plan — likely to be pushed well into the autumn — and rising opposition from farmers.

As the repercussions of the report — published on Thursday, a week after the Commons rose for its summer recess — began to spread yesterday, Germany demanded a reinstatement of a total ban on British beef exports, while Tory backbench Euro-sceptics called for ministers to reinstate the ill-starred non-cooperation policy.

Experts were cautious about speculating how many extra cattle might have to be slaughtered to take account of the new uncertainties over BSE. But Colin Maclean, chairman of the Meat and Livestock Commission, said: "We are talking about maybe 20,000-30,000 extra cows, but it is very difficult to say because we don't know where Europe is going to draw the line."

The European Commission in Brussels said it would be up to Britain to come up with a figure following its rethink. Franz Fischler, the Austrian agriculture commissioner, warned Mr Hogg in a letter, sent on Thursday but released only yesterday, that the delay in implementing the selective slaughter policy, agreed following the Florence heads of government summit six weeks ago, would delay the lifting of the beef ban.

"Although I understand your reasons, this delay will have the effect of postponing the further reduction in the incidence of BSE which is the cornerstone of our policy... In any case it will be necessary to consider the need for expanding the selective slaughter programme in the

light of this new information," the letter stated.

The report — summarising an experiment at the Government's central veterinary laboratory in Weybridge which concluded there was a 10 per cent risk of the transmission of BSE from mothers to their calves — was considered by the expert committee examining BSE on July 19.

The evidence was not disclosed to the Commons before the House rose a week later, despite a debate on the crisis. The Government at that time did not put forward its proposals for the selective cull, which had been due to start at the beginning of the month. At that stage it had agreed to slaughter 150,000 cattle linked to cases of BSE.

Paul Tyler, the Liberal Democrat agriculture spokesman, claimed the new evidence threw the selective slaughter policy into doubt and could lead to a withdrawal of co-operation by livestock farmers.

He demanded an explanation for Mr Hogg's "deliberate" failure to inform Parliament of the latest scientific evidence during the debate. Mr Tyler, MP for North Cornwall, said: "If MPs from rural areas had known about it last week, I am sure Mr Hogg would have had a much rougher ride. He had better have a good reason for hiding that from Parliament. The selective slaughter plan is in doubt... the first reaction from the farming community has been bitter opposition to any more slaughter."

On BBC radio, a regional German agricultural minister claimed the revelations meant all British beef exports should cease, including the beef today cleared for sale abroad in June.

Berndt Hoehn said: "We would prefer a strict ban against Britain again. The ban can only be lifted when any risk for human beings and animals from BSE can be excluded. For the moment we are far away from that."

Bill Cash, the MP for Stafford, accused the commission — which has called merely for Britain to reconsider what should be done — of making outrageous demands, timed deliberately for when Parliament was not sitting.



Rural charm... a typical gite. Such holidays now have an image problem in Britain



Village idyll... Britons, victims of the exchange rate, are turning their backs on France

# Brits give 'uncool' gîtes a miss

Lure of lumpy beds, knocking pipes and hordes of insects fading fast, reports Alex Duval Smith

**T**HE word even entered the English language. Taking a holiday in a "gîte" conjured up images of rustic charm, cycling peasants, vineyards at the end of the garden — a corner of France all to oneself. But as fast as you can say "un vin de pays, s'il vous plaît", French self-catering holidays are on their way out. Britons, victims of the exchange rate and enticed elsewhere, are no longer piling into cars to taste the joys of rural France.

Gîtes de France, which has offered self-catering holidays since 1955, is closing its London office after seeing British bookings almost halve in four years.

In the cottages of Dordogne, the trend is confirmed. Gisèle Delpech, a farmer in Proissans, used to be able to count on a steady flow of Britons to the three gîtes on her land. She said: "Eighty per cent of my guests were British. This year, maybe one fifth of them are."

"The entries in the guest book are almost entirely in English. Unfortunately, I cannot understand what they say. But British people tell me it is too expensive. Those still coming are renting directly from British people who have bought property here."

Mrs Delpech, who has offered self-catering accommodation through Gîtes de France for 14 years, does not believe the British have lost their love of the area. "They built Mompastier in the 15th century and they still feel very attached to Dordogne's caves, food and châteaux."

She said there is a trend for more Belgians. "I am hoping they will replace the British, but I am sad. The British are so sweet."

Fascal Boulet-Gercourt, director-general of Gîtes de France, claims that even though he is scaling down

the London operation, Britons will continue to rent the 18,000 homes on its books thanks to a new partnership with Brittany Ferries.

But he conceded that gîtes, rented mainly to families, have an uncool image. "People who came with their parents in the 1970s and 1980s think it is outdated to take a gîte."

He denied the what was once considered quaintly rural — lumpy beds, knocking pipes and lots of insects — is now seen as plain primitive. An increasing number of our homes have swimming pools and the owners are making real efforts to raise standards," he said.

The company arranged 400,000 lettings last year, two-thirds of them to French people. Britons — 40,000 of whom rented — were the largest foreign group, followed by Belgians and Dutch people.

In common with most tourism specialists — who have observed a 23 per cent drop in British holiday bookings this year — Mr Boulet-Gercourt believes the main reason for the decline is the removal of sterling from the European exchange rate mechanism in 1992. "Sterling has lost 25 per cent against the franc in four years," he said.

The cost factor — which commonly puts a 25cl glass of beer at £3 — appears increasingly to be prompting Britons to spend their holidays at home or in low budget destinations, like Greece, Turkey and Spain.

French tourism officials do not hide their concern. France remains the top tourism destination in the world, with 60 million visitors a year. Among them, the 9 million Britons who come are second only to Germans in francophilia.

Figures published yesterday showed tourism from all countries in all sectors from campsites to five-star hotels — is in sharp decline, even compared to last year when a terrorist bombing campaign put people off.

A tourism spokeswoman, Aline Carason, said: "In our marketing, we are aware that we need to tackle two areas: the belief that France is expensive and people are unfriendly."



French prices, such as £3 for a glass of beer, appear to be prompting Britons to stay at home or go to cheaper countries

# Sci-fi thriller plots Olympic security

A novel reveals the secret operation to fight nuclear terror at the Atlanta Games

Christopher Reed in Los Angeles

**A** THRILLER novel about a nuclear terrorist plot at the Atlanta Olympics has become a factual source on the latest developments in United States security.

The Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) ordered 400 copies of Red Mercury by Max Barclay, a novel by retired Bill Clinton read before visiting the site of the Games. Despite its lurid sci-fi plot, many of the details are real.

The book discloses that a team with PhDs in nuclear physics has been standing by at a secret location. The Nuclear Emergency Search Team (Nest) comprises volunteers from Los Alamos, the US laboratory that produced the first atom bomb, and other government-run thermonuclear research centres.

Supporting Nest is the Technical Escort Unit (TEU), a secret group of much-inoculated army experts on chemical and biological warfare that assisted Japanese authorities in last year's gas attack on the Tokyo underground.

Watching over everything is a surveillance satellite permanently poised over Atlanta to produce "battlefield" imagery to assist troop deployment in the event of a catastrophic terrorist attack.

In keeping with the clandestine tone, Max Barclay turns out to be Ben Sherwood, aged 32, a Harvard and Oxford-educated non-fiction writer, who assumed a pen-name for this, his first novel.

He was not hopeful of gaining access to information when he made research inquiries of security executives at the FBI, CIA and Pentagon. But the shadowy counter-terrorists seemed eager to disclose for the first time their latest technology and tactics.

"They are generally not allowed to talk to journalists," Mr Sherwood said. "But they'd spent years in absolute obscurity preparing for these 17 days of Games, and they had a good story to tell. They wanted some recognition."

There are 57 law enforcement and paramilitary units at the Games, with 30,000 personnel — three for every athlete. "There's a lot of rivalry, so that was another motive to describe their achievements," Mr Sherwood said.

Mr Sherwood spent 10 days at the Games and felt secure, but left Atlanta just before the park bomb that killed a woman and injured 110 people. He admits that "no system is foolproof". But given the sophisticated technology available, the bombing raises disturbing questions.

With all the hi-tech experts planning for smuggled nuclear weapons, they were caught out by "Bubba's bomb", the crude device that the FBI believes was placed by an amateur. Yet this was the most likely US terrorist scenario in view of the Oklahoma City bombing last year.

Mr Sherwood's odyssey, his GP diagnosed him as also having hardening of the arteries, leading to confusion.

# Old Bill's lunch trip ends 1,008 miles and 37 hours later — 'spiked' by police on the M1

John Ezard

**I**T WAS one of those nice, easy little trips you plan on holiday. Bill Alexander, a retired traffic policeman, set off with his wife, Cathleen, from their Hereford hotel to drive 15 miles to Ross-on-Wye for lunch.

That was on a Saturday morning. Their journey ended 1,008 miles and 37 hours later — sleepless, increasingly desperate hours. Police stopped their car with a metal-spiked roadway "stinger" at 1am the following Monday. A totally lost Mr Alexander, aged 69, was driving the wrong way down the M1 near Barnsley, Yorkshire.

He and his wife, aged 70, have suffered for years from angina and high blood pressure, for which they had no medication in the car. After Mr Alexander's odyssey, his GP diagnosed him as also having hardening of the arteries, leading to confusion.



Lost in Wales... ex-traffic policeman Bill Alexander

Yesterday their son, also named Bill Alexander, bitterly attacked Yorkshire police and Barnsley magistrates for subjecting his father to a dangerous driving case because of the M1 incident without waiting for a medical report to be prepared.

He said his parents were dragged out of their car on the motorway, despite telling police they had heart conditions. "There ought to be more controls, particularly on the way the police treat vulnerable people. This was not just."

Mr Alexander senior admitted the charge and was disqualified from driving for two years. He cannot remember what routes he took. But he painstakingly kept petrol receipts, which show he apparently drove through Ross-on-Wye without realising and turned north near Oxford.

From there he drove to Manchester — 160.6 miles by country roads, according to the AA yesterday. At some stage the frantic couple tried to reach their home in St Helens, Lancashire. They kept medication there as well as in the Hereford hotel.

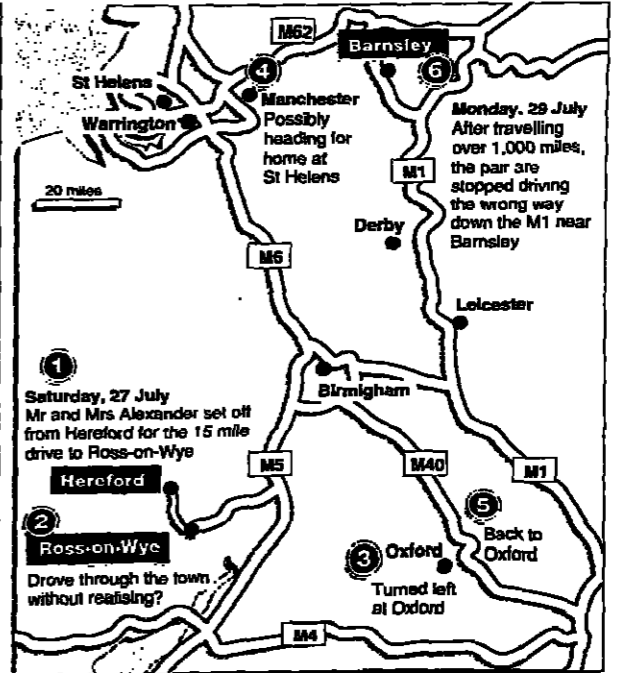
But somehow they drove back to Oxford, and from Oxford to Barnsley. Receipts

show they twice bought petrol in both Oxford and Manchester. Otherwise their routes are untraceable, except that Mr Alexander complained of being baffled by Welsh language road signs.

This indicates they travelled west as well as north and south. They stopped for one meal. Mr Alexander said: "I didn't have a clue where we were and my wife can't drive so she didn't know either. I did have a map but I'd lent it to my son and I didn't have it with me."

"We were told Ross-on-Wye wasn't far from the hotel. We asked for directions three times but they must have been wrong. We carried on driving through the night."

His son said Mr Alexander would have been willing to surrender his licence in court. Instead, the conduct of the police and the court meant he would be free to drive in two years. "But I doubt if he will ever drive again," the son added.



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**Labour**

Report backs easier entry for US cash, but Bottomley is lukewarm on ideas to boost film industry

# Hollywood vision for British cinema

Dan Glaister on a new look at big screen

**C**OLIN Welland started it all off when he cried "The British are coming", anticipating a British invasion of Hollywood as he collected the Oscar for Chariots Of Fire in 1981. It never happened, and the British film industry has since seen more false dawns than new films.

Yesterday, the prospect of Hollywood coming to Britain became more likely with the publication of the Middleton report on the British film industry. The report argued that the industry should follow the Hollywood model, integrating production, distribution and overseas exhibition. It also urged tax breaks for filmmakers and investors.

The definition of a British film should be changed to allow more Hollywood investment, the report said. The main Hollywood studios could then open subsidiaries in Britain, and become eligible for lottery funding and tax benefits.

On a trip to Hollywood last week, the National Heritage Secretary, Virginia Bottomley, said: "I am committed to broadening and deepening the UK film industry by promoting co-production between the UK and the US." She told the industry magazine Screen International that American studios had told her that "one of the things that needed looking at was making it simpler to form a British company".

Boyd Farrow, editor of Screen International, said: "Far from addressing the problems here, Mrs Bottomley's comments make it easier for the US to make films here. That can be fantastic for the economy, but most of the profits go abroad."

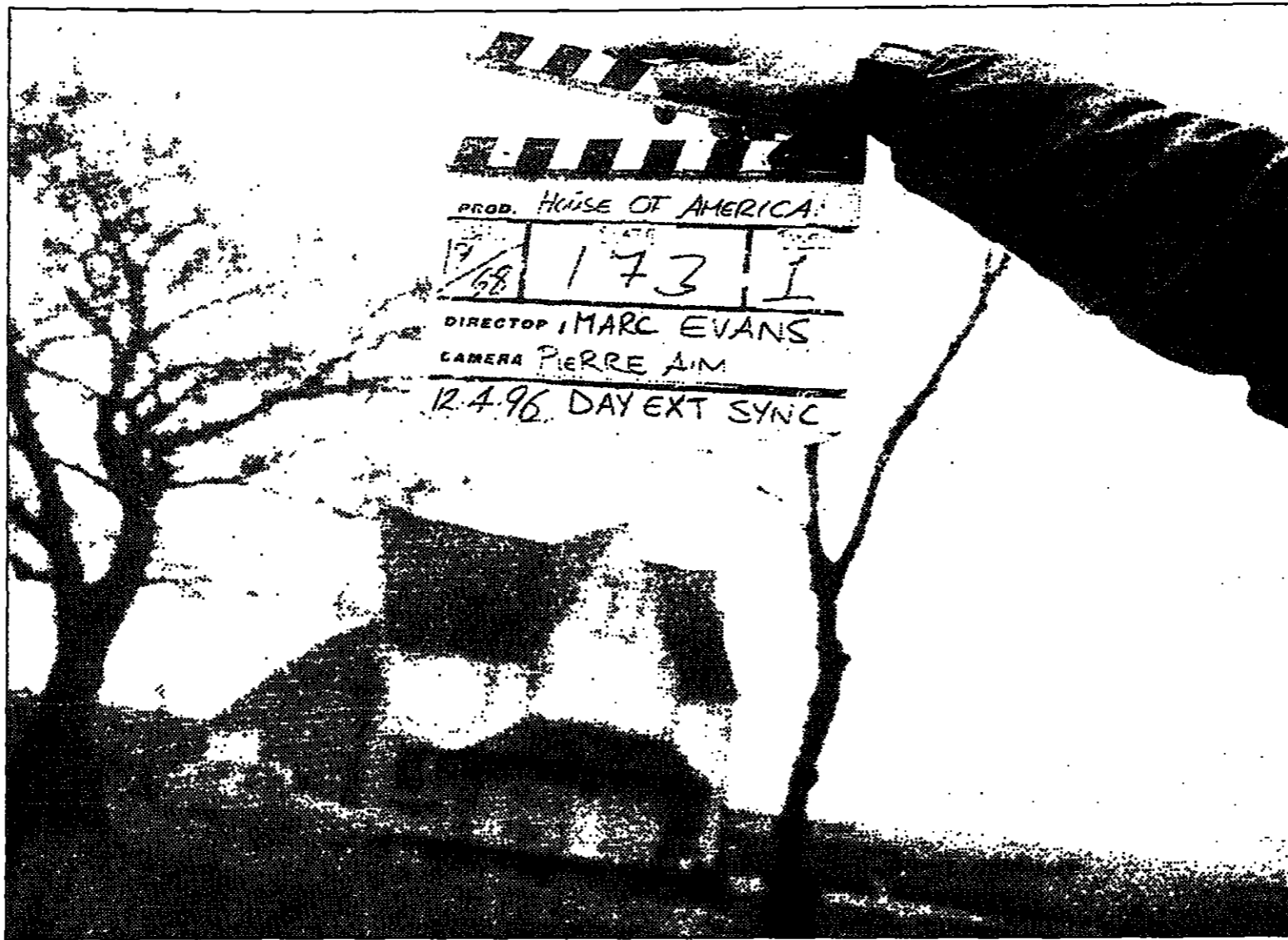
Mrs Bottomley was lukewarm about Sir Peter Middleton's report, calling it a "thoughtful contribution to the debate".

The report, commissioned by the Department of National Heritage, called for the creation of three mini-studios with lottery money, which would produce and distribute films. They could eventually form one studio to rival the Americans. The aim would be for the studio to develop over time into a major international film-making and distributing company. Hollywood has a stranglehold over much of the film industry because it controls distribution and exhibition as well as production.

Sir Peter, chairman of investment bank BZW, said: "People complain that Hollywood is run by accountants. Well, we could do with a bit of that. Films are big business and you have to know about marketing and distribution as well as how to actually make a film."

"We're not trying to replicate Hollywood. There's nowhere near enough money for that. But we would like to adopt the principle of doing things on a large scale and spreading risks for investors. British film-makers have traditionally asked investors to back a single film, but this makes no economic sense because of the risk involved. We (BZW) would never invest in a single film, but we would invest in a studio that was, say, handling 12 films because the risk is spread."

Leader comment, page 14; Peter Middleton interviewed, Outlook page 18



House of America in production... seven backers had to be found to raise the modest £1.3 million budget

PHOTOGRAPH: MARK TULLIE

## Producer battles with hotch-potch funding

### 'Profits must be ploughed back to create local movie culture'

Stuart Millar

**S**HERYL Crown is well aware of how it feels to be at the sharp end of raising finance for a film. House of America, a Welsh film which she is producing, has just finished shooting and is due for release next spring.

"Putting together a film in this country is a very difficult process if you don't have one funder who can put up all the cash," she said. Although her film had a total budget of just £1.3 million — tiny by comparison with Hollywood movies — Ms Crown had to rely on no fewer than seven backers, including the Welsh Arts Council's lottery fund and the Dutch film fund.

"The funding is a real hotch-potch. To put it together we had to write lots of letters, knock on lots of doors, and hassle lots of people."

House of America, written by local playwright Ed Thomas and directed by Marc Evans, is about impoverished kids from the Welsh valleys who fantasise about the United States after their father abandons them for a better life across the Atlantic. It is part of a new breed of contemporary English language films to emerge from Wales — a factor which complicated funding.

"Innovative new films with first-time feature directors are even more difficult to fund. People don't know what they are going for if there are no stars attached," said Ms Crown.

"We were lucky to have a really brilliant first-time writer and director. We were the first to get Welsh lottery money, and we were lucky enough to receive the Dutch money as part of a reciprocal deal. That gave us the first big chunk, making it much easier to open doors."

She believes that the Middleton report's recommendations for pump-priming lottery cash will be an invaluable help for British filmmakers.

"We've made a lot of films this year but what about next year? If the lottery money disappeared, God forbid, then the whole thing would collapse without the infrastructure to hold it up, and all we would be left with is American money."

"What we need is an infrastructure to transform British film from a cottage industry to a major industry. And we can't do that if we don't plough the profits back into production. It would be great as Europeans not to have to be dependent on the Americans. It would be fantastic if we could create our own film culture and didn't have to make American films."



Colin Welland, writer of Chariots Of Fire, after tempting fate with his 'British are coming' cry at the Oscars

## Pub landlord outed as first gay in Archers

News taken calmly says Andrew Culf

**F**IRST there were rumours about Jean-Paul in the Great Gables kitchen, and Shane in Nelson's Wine Bar. There were even whispers about Kenton Archer during his long absence in Australia.

Now Radio 4's daily soap The Archers has its first officially declared gay character — Sean Myerson, the new landlord of Ambridge's Cat and Fiddle pub.

So far the news has been taken calmly by the programme's 3.75 million listeners, whose vision of a rural idyll has been shattered over the past two years by the car crash death of Mark Hebden, an armed post office raid and the jailing of Susan Carter.

The BBC said it had received no protest calls after Thursday night's episode, or yesterday's repeat. Some listeners had already assumed the landlord, who referred to his co-landlord Peter as his "partner", was gay, while others assumed it was a business relationship.

Vanessa Whitburn, the programme's editor, who does not want The Archers to become an anachronistic museum piece, said: "I hope listeners will react to it positively. It is only part of his personality."

The "outing" of Sean's character is just the latest attempt by radio and television soaps to outdo each other with sensational storylines. Last night Channel 4's Brookside, which courted controversy 18 months ago with television soap's first lesbian kiss — to be followed by ITV's Emmerdale — was braced for complaints over an incest story.

Seven million viewers saw Nat (John Sandford) and Georgia Simpson (Helen Grace), who are brother and sister, in a naked incestuous clinch, when their Brookside neighbour burst in on them.

Mal Young, series producer, said: "The subject matter has shocked people from the day we first announced it. I'm sure we will get some complaints. People will always blame TV for things going wrong in the world."

"It is a little more graphic and it marks a peak in the storyline... It is a very interesting and very complicated subject."

He added: "We don't want to promote incest. But can they be classed as sexual deviants? It is not about abuse — it is about where lines can be drawn in sexuality."

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## Anger over gay sex workers ad

David Brindley, Social Services Correspondent

**A** HEALTH Service trust was under fire yesterday for seeking to recruit two gay men to carry out Aids prevention work among homosexuals in "public sex environments".

Tory backbenchers queued up to criticise Barnet Healthcare trust after it was lampooned in the Daily Mail over its recruitment advertisement, outlining the experiments "Cottaging or Cruising Project (COC)".

The north London trust's chief executive, Murray Duncanson, last night defended the scheme. He said it was in line with Department of Health thinking, wholly government-funded and would save money in the long run by helping stop gay men contracting Aids.

The advertisement, which appeared in the Guardian, seeks two gay or bisexual men to act as "Aids education unit field workers for Men who have Sex with Men (MSM)". It offers a nine-month contract, paying between £17,093 and £19,790 for a

36-hour week. The workers, who will work in Barnet, Brent and Harrow, will need "a good understanding of cottaging and cruising issues".

In the Daily Mail Richard Littlejohn wrote: "Taxpayers' money is to be spent on employing a pair of homosexual or bisexual men to bang around public lavatories and parks, chatting to men who go there for casual sex and asking if there is anything they can do for them."

Tory backbenchers weighed in. Terry Dicks (Hayes and Harlington), said: "This is a dreadful waste of public money. Homosexuals are perverts and this is just... sending more perverts round to tell them how to do it better."

Peter Tatchell, of the gay rights group OutRage, said many homosexuals were not on the gay scene. "This outreach work is... attempting to save lives," he said.

Mr Duncanson said the scheme was far from unique and funded entirely from government Aids grants. Studies showed men who went cottaging and cruising were least likely to practise safer sex and therefore most at risk.

**The curious thing about the bloke's bloke moustache is that as far as I can tell, no woman in recorded history has ever actually liked it.**

Readers' Digest page 15

**Lynn Barber**  
joins the Observer and begins by reviewing Sunday's television, tomorrow in **The Observer**

We're looking for who wants to write fiction

كنا لوالدنا

Slick marketing means singles are instant hits and then plummet, writes Nick Varley



Left: David Baddiel, Frank Skinner and the Lightning Seeds' Ian Brondie together for England's official album of Euro 96; and right: the Fugees



George Michael has topped charts PHOTOGRAPH ALAN REVELL

Volatile pop charts 'losing credibility'

IT MIGHT just be a mid-life crisis. Or maybe, to paraphrase one of their better known visitors, they want to die before they get old. Either way, the pop charts - the soundtrack to youth for 40 years - are falling into disrepute. Tomorrow Robbie Williams' debut solo single enters the charts, following his departure from Take That. But many in the music business believe that if Williams enters at number one, it could accelerate the decline in the reputation of the charts. If it becomes an instant number one, the single would be the 17th of the last 21 new best sellers to debut at the top. It would also be the 21st record to go straight in at the top in the last 15 months. In contrast it took 37 years from the charts' first countdown in 1952 to notch up the first 21. The volatility spreads right through the charts: up to half of it changes each week because of new en-

tries. One week last month half the top 10 were new entries, for the first time. Often the high new entries drop as swiftly as they appeared. Now critics within the music industry are becoming as vocal as Sir Cliff on Centre Court and as sneering as Johnny Rotten circa 1977, warning there needs to be a radical overhaul if the charts are to survive. More importantly, with the industry's annual net foreign earnings standing at \$571 million, some fear the countdown's falling prestige is worsening the chances of British acts abroad. Derek Green, chairman of China Records, one of the biggest independent labels and a member of the British Phonographic Industry Council, said: "If you're trying to break an act in America, you say 'They were number two in the British charts last week'. What about this week? And you have to say, 'Er, 27'." Charts have always been a marketing-led business right from the early days of Elvis and his hip-swivelling television appearances. But the difference now is that the record marketing departments have taken their operations to new, and highly successful, heights. Singles are released to radio station weeks before their release date to build up demand, television slots are booked weeks ahead, and cut-price singles are on offer in the first week on sale. Mr Green said: "With pricing, now the damage has been done because we have educated consumers to rush out and buy singles at 99p in the first week. The following week they're three times as much - and we wonder why sales drop off." Independent record companies face the additional problems of being unable to offer discounts or even getting their records into major shops which prefer to take the cheaper major label offers.

Hit parade

The year's number ones

- Michael Jackson - Earth Song (3 Dec)
George Michael - Just a Little Bit (14 Jan)
Babylon Zoo - Spaceman (21 Jan)
Oasis - Don't Look Back in Anger (25 Feb)
Take That - How Deep Is Your Love (3 March)
The Prodigy - Firestarter (24 March)
Mark Morrison - Return of the Mack (14 April)
George Michael - Fast Love (29 April)
Gina G - Oh Ahn Just a Little Bit (19 May)
Baddiel/Skinner and the Lightning Seeds - Three Lions (28 May)
The Fugees - Killing Me Softly (2 June)
Baddiel/Skinner and the Lightning Seeds - Three Lions (30 June)
The Fugees - Killing Me Softly (7 July)
Gary Barlow - Forever Love (14 July)
The Spice Girls - Wannabe (21 July)

'Loophole' fails to save embryos

Sarah Boseley

THE regulatory body governing fertility treatment refused to delay the destruction of thousands of frozen embryos yesterday, despite claims by lawyers on the side that they had found a loophole in the law. At an emergency hearing before a high court judge on Thursday, a childless woman whose estranged husband would not sign the papers to extend storage of their embryo was granted an injunction against a London clinic. The cluster of cells will be safeguarded for 21 days to allow a full hearing. Her solicitor Graham Ross, a specialist in medical cases, based in Liverpool, says the woman's egg was fertilised with her husband's sperm before the 1991 law, restricting storage to five years, came into force. He claims hundreds of couples whose embryos have been destroyed will be eligible for compensation if their clients win. It was reported yesterday that other women may also have been granted injunctions, but no details were available. Mr Ross asked the Human Fertilisation and Embryology Authority to instruct all clinics to postpone further destruction of embryos until after the case. The authority refused. Mr Ross said his attitude was "absolutely appalling". Mark Salmon, a spokesman for the authority, said: "The authority took the independent advice of lawyers and of the lawyers representing the Department of Health. The authority did not believe, he said, that any loopholes had been missed. The issue of consent given before the 1991 legislation had been "actively considered." Peter Brinsden, a consultant at the Bourn Hall clinic in Cambridge, agreed it was unlikely that the court case would change anything. "People always think they are going to find loopholes. The law is so complex. I have been involved with it for six or seven years. A lawyer who says that it is going to have difficulties. I believe it is pretty watertight." Any challenges should have been put up weeks ago, he said. "We have struggled like anything to have the law changed." In May, it was altered so that couples could get an extension of the storage period to 10 years. He and his staff were unhappy to be destroying embryos. "We have just completed it," he said. Some 800 embryos belonging to 250 couples had been allowed to perish. "It has been a major logistical and emotional nightmare, mainly for my colleagues in embryology. I have just spoken to one of them and she is visibly distressed by the whole thing. They spend their entire lives trying to create embryos and help people." He had pressed for storage to be automatic for the reproductive life of the woman for whom the embryos were intended, which would probably be 15 or 20 years. He hoped things would change before the next five-year cut. "I think over the next four years, we will gain further experience with the law as it stands and pressure will be brought. A lot more people are aware and educated about the problems now. I hope people will reconsider the matter before the end of the next five-year period and we can make it all more patient-friendly."

I could be wrong. Outlook, page 15

Doctors offer positive diagnosis as TV bosses suggest medical show is in terminal state

Andrew Cull Media Correspondent

JUNIOR doctors have joined the clamour to rescue Cardiac Arrest, the BBC's acclaimed hospital drama, from its deathbed. Officially, the BBC says the

future of the series - an uncompromising portrait of the chaotic working conditions and bed-hopping antics of NHS staff - is under review. Dr Roderick Dunn, a senior house officer in surgery at Plymouth, said Cardiac Arrest "expresses the way junior doctors feel, and raises issues such as their lack of sleep."

doctors, many of whom have contacted BMA News Review, a magazine for doctors, calling for its revival. However, he said BBC Scotland and the independent

Ged Mercurio, who wrote the series under the name John MacUre and worked for three years as a junior doctor before quitting to become a writer, said: "It seems the programme does not have a future on BBC1."

company World Production were both keen to make another series, and he believed BBC's new controller, Mark Thompson, could give it the kiss of life. It has had steady audiences of around 6 million, but this is regarded as insufficient in the ratings battle with ITV.

"Junior doctors are a small part of the audience, but their support has been gratifying," said Mr Mercurio. The other cloud hanging over the series is the possible departure of two of its stars: Helen Baxendale, as the sharp-tongued Dr Claire Mallard, and Aileen Blunt, as Dr Rajna Rajna. Both have heavy work commitments.

Blair puts final touches to Labour's front bench team

TONY Blair has completed the changes and appointments to his full front bench team. This is now the final list. Names followed by an asterisk indicate an elected member of the shadow cabinet. Leader: Tony Blair Deputy Leader: John Prescott Deputy of Leadership (Public Services): Derek Foster, Richard Caborn Treasury and Economic Affairs: Gordon Brown, Alistair Darling, Dawn Primorchi, Mike O'Brien, Alan Milburn Foreign Affairs: Robin Cook, Joyce Quin, Tony Lloyd, Derek Falchell, Heather Chis Smith, Tessa Jowell, Kevin Barron, Ann Coffey Home Affairs: Jack Straw, Alan Michael, Doug Henderson, George Howarth, Social Security: Harriet Harman, Henry McLeish, John Denham, Malcolm Wick, Education and Employment: David Blunkett, Stephen Byers, Bryan Davies, Peter Hain, Estelle Morris, plus Ian McCartney, Peter Hain (concentrating on employment), Food, Agriculture and Rural Affairs: Gavin Stang, Elliot Morley, Lin Gooding, Trade and Industry: Margaret Beckett, Adam Ingram, Stuart Bell, Nigel Griffiths, John Birt, Kim Howells, Geoff Hoon, Barbara Roche, National Heritage: Jack Cunningham\*, Mark Fisher, Tom Pridgen, Lewis Moonse, Transport: Andrew Smith\*, Keith Bradlee, Glenda Jackson, Northern Ireland: Margaret Mowlem\*, Tony Wright, Jim Dowds, Ian Blair, Scotland: George Robertson\*, John McCall, Malcolm Chisholm, Helen Liddell, Wales: Iwan Davies\*, Wyn Griffiths, Iwan Morgan, Overseas Development: Clare Short, George Foulkes Environment and London: Frank Dobson\*, Hilary Armstrong, Nick Raynsford, Keith Vaz, with Graham Amis (Health and Safety), Education, Department and Arms Control: David Clark\*, John Reid, Paul Martin, John Birt, with Graham Amis (Health and Safety), Law Officers: John Morris, Lord Chancellor's Department: Paul Boateng, Women's Minister: Peter Mandelson, Election Commission: Peter Mandelson, Brian Wilson, White Office: Chief Whip: Donald Dewar, Deputy Chief Whip: Nick Brown, Patrick Whip, George Muir, Whips: Dennis Toner, John Cunningham, Joe Baines, Joe Owen-Jones, Eric Clarke, Bob Ainsworth, Eric Hartley, David Collins, Jane Kennedy, Greg Pope, Brian Patten, Tommy McAvoy, Kevin Hughes, Angela Eagle, Clive Bates.

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Libel award of £20,000 bankrupts cult watcher

DAVID POLLISTER THE head of a charity that monitors cults and self-improvement groups has been made bankrupt by a California-based organisation he criticised in Canada 14 years ago. In the High Court, Ian Haworth of the Cult Information Centre said he was unable to pay the £20,000 libel damages awarded against him in Canada in an action by Landmark Education International Inc. Landmark, which changed its name from Werner Erhard & Associates International Inc in 1991, has offices in London. It offers intensive management courses. Mr Erhard was founder of the controversial EST group in the 1970s. The organisation originally complained about critical remarks by Mr Haworth at a Canadian university in 1982, reported in the local newspaper. He ran a group there called Council on Mind Abuse. In 1990, after returning to England, he was told the libel action had been heard in 1989 in his absence. He received a statutory demand for the money, including interest, last February. In April Landmark was granted the right to proceed with his bankruptcy. Mr Haworth, aged 48, who earns about £12,000 a year and owns no property, said: "It will change nothing but my credit rating. For me and my work it's business as usual." Landmark said it had taken the action because, it claimed, Mr Haworth had continued to make "inaccurate and defamatory statements about Landmark Education and its programmes". It said responsible professionals had not found in its work any characteristics associated with cults.

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Make your will - or administer an estate - without a solicitor

Have you been putting off making a will? Could you administer the estate of a deceased relative? Do you understand the basic rules of inheritance tax, and do you know how much you could save your heirs by following a few simple guidelines? Wills and Probate is a practical guide from Which? It's helped over 300,000 people tackle these tasks simply and effectively, and explains • how to make and revise - a straightforward will, so that your wishes can be carried out without complications • the implications of inheritance tax, with details of how substantial savings can be made • how the Probate Registry works • what happens in the absence of a will. The book describes law and procedures in England and Wales, and outlines the main differences which apply in Scotland and Northern Ireland. With full details of all the procedures that executors should follow in administering the estate of a deceased person, Wills and Probate really is invaluable. It costs just £10.99 (P&P FREE), 60 pence over your copy NOW, using the order form below. Full refund if not satisfied.

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# Exhausted president 'needs two months of rest'

## Shadow of Deng hangs over Yeltsin

James Meek in Moscow

**T**HE danger of Russia being left for years with a physically exhausted leader loomed again yesterday as one of Boris Yeltsin's closest aides said the president was "colossally tired" and needed two months of peace and quiet to recover from the strains of his re-election campaign.

The warning by Georgi Satarov, a veteran Yeltsin loyalist who advised on political tactics, raised the question whether Russia's feuding islands of power could control the country under a leader — like Deng Xiaoping in China — ailing and absent from the scene.

Mr Yeltsin has a long history of ill health and drinking, and has suffered two heart attacks this year. After astonishing the world with his barnstorming campaign tours in spring, he suffered a relapse of his mysterious condition early last month and has scarcely left the Borkhiva sanatorium outside Moscow since then.

He has been seen on television in brief, carefully staged meetings with senior administration officials. Appointments and decrees have continued to be issued in his name.

But Mr Satarov gave the impression that Mr Yeltsin would need all his strength to take part in next Friday's presidential inauguration ceremony at the Kremlin, and

that he would need a long time to recover. "He is not as well now, of course, as he was in May," the aide told the daily newspaper *Sovodnya*. "But he is in excellent intellectual and psychological shape."

"He is colossally tired. You remember his election campaign? He is an elderly man, after all. There's no way to avoid it. He'll need probably two months to get over this strain. It only needs peace and quiet."

**'He's elderly. There's no way to avoid it, his age is bound to show'**

In a clue to who was at the helm of the ship of state, Mr Satarov said Mr Yeltsin had given the new head of administration, Anatoly Chubais, the leading role in forming the new Kremlin team.

If Mr Yeltsin is incapacitated, or at least unable to play a public role, for a long period, the prime minister, Viktor Chernomyrdin, and the president's security overlord, Alexander Lebed, will have to settle between them who has executive power — with Mr Chubais acting as intermediary. All three have visited their ailing patron at the sanatorium.

It is possible that a troika

regency could endure if Russia was more stable. General Lebed in charge of army reform and law and order, Mr Chernomyrdin looking after the economy, and Mr Chubais protecting Mr Yeltsin's image as head of state.

But emergencies such as the Chechen conflict and the unpaid wages crisis, which is leading to growing industrial unrest, cut across portfolios. Besides, Mr Chernomyrdin cannot yet rely on parliament to confirm him as head of the next government.

The Kremlin guessing game is being played out against a curious vacuum in the political process as the main opposition — the communist-nationalist movement led by Gennady Zyuganov — tries to find its bearings after its defeat.

The founding congress of a new umbrella opposition group, the National-Patriotic Union of Russia, is due next week, but the movement is certain to be divided between those wanting to adopt a centrist position and those hoping to harness the anger of millions of unpaid workers.

Similarly, attempts to form a broad anti-communist, centre-right coalition in parliament have foundered, leaving a mass of representatives without a clear figurehead or ideology. Mr Yeltsin has succeeded in accruing power by winning the election and creating a strong presidential role in the new Russian constitution. His own constitution, however, seems more likely to let him down.



A Russian Mi-8 helicopter carrying supplies for guards on the Tajik-Afghan border is guided by a smoke flare to a landing pad. The Kremlin is backing Tajikistan's government, which is fighting a guerrilla insurrection, and has 25,000 troops on the border.

# Fish loophole heats tempers in frozen sea

Jon Henley in Helsinki

**A**SMALL triangle of sea frozen for nine months of the year is at the centre of a bitter row between Norway, Russia and Iceland about who may fish its rich stocks of cod and flounder.

"It hasn't exactly come to blows yet, but there is a lot of ill feeling," said Halvard Johannessen, Norway's fisheries minister. "We hope we can settle it peacefully, but it won't be easy."

Squeezed between Norwegian and Russian national waters and a vast fisheries protection area around the Arctic islands of Spitsbergen, the aptly-named Loop Hole is a 300-mile patch of international water in the middle of the inhospitable but environmentally precious Barents Sea.

As such, Iceland claims its trawlers are entitled to fish there. But Norway and Russia, which border the Barents Sea and have traditionally regulated the annual catch from it, say Iceland's forays into the international zone are severely disrupting the delicate balance of fish stocks in the sea as a whole.

Norway and Russia take the lion's share of the Barents Sea catch, agreeing a quota for each of a handful of other fleets which have long fished there — including Poland, Greenland, the Faeroe Islands and the European Union, which takes just 4 per cent.

But Norway claims that last year's total cod quota of 700,000 tonnes was exceeded by at least 40,000 tonnes, due almost entirely to intense fishing by Icelandic trawlers in the Loop Hole.

"This could have very dramatic consequences for the

stock," Mr Johannessen said. "It was heavily over-fished and we had to set severe restrictions on our own fleets. Now it's in excellent condition and it faces the same threat through none of our doing. There's nothing we can legally do to stop it."

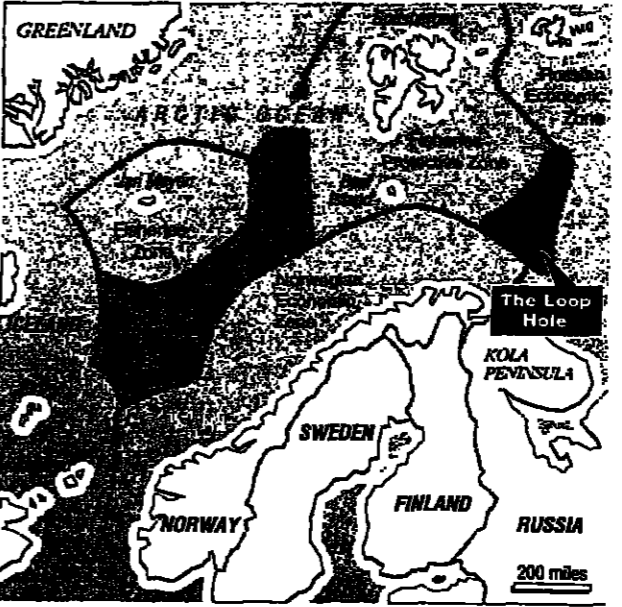
Iceland, which the Barents fisheries group claims has not established "traditional rights" to fish in the region, says environmental arguments are a disguise for an economic cartel. "Iceland is fishing for cod in this international area, just as Norway and Russia fish in international waters off Iceland," said Halldor Asgrinsson, the foreign minister.

"We are very aware of our duty not to over-fish, and we want to agree a quota. But there has been a reluctance to accept the Loop Hole, a nation in the middle of the north Atlantic that is so dependent on fisheries, is entitled to fish there at all."

As the two-month fishing season begins in the brief arctic summer, angry Norwegian fishermen are urging Oslo to extend their zone to include the disputed Loop Hole. Twenty-five Icelandic trawlers have been sighted so far, and more are expected, despite disappointing early-season catches.

If the dispute cannot be resolved by negotiation, Mr Asgrinsson said, it could be one of the first to be heard by a new United Nations tribunal on the law of the sea, being set up in Hamburg. "We are confident our rights will be recognised," he said.

Denmark yesterday called for urgent talks with Iceland to defuse a row over fishing rights in the Denmark Strait lying between Greenland and Iceland.



# Krajina Serbs 'still terrorised'

Julian Borger in Sarajevo

**T**HREE few elderly Serbs who clung to their homes in the Krajina region of Croatia despite a Croatian army offensive a year ago are still being terrorised, the Red Cross and human rights organisations said yesterday.

In separate reports, Human Rights Watch (HRW) in New York accused the government of allowing "looting, burning and killing" to continue in Krajina despite its promises of protection and The International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) alleged that "soft terrorism" was being carried out against the region's aged Serbs.

The scathing reports were an embarrassment to Croatia's president, Franjo Tudjman, on the day he met President Clinton in Washington. Croatia is trying to renegotiate entry to the Council of Europe after being barred in May for human rights infringements.

Mr Tudjman has also been criticised by mediators in Bosnia for failing to rein in hardline Croats who are refusing to accept the results of June elections in the city of Mostar, which were narrowly won by Muslim-led parties.

US officials had hoped that, after meeting Mr Clinton, Mr Tudjman would call on the Mostar Croats to end their boycott of the city council. But at a meeting yesterday in the Bosnian coastal town of Neum, Bosnian Croat members of Mr Tudjman's Croatian Democratic Union resisted their refusal to co-operate with Muslims.

The European Union says it will abort its two-year peace and reconciliation mission in Mostar if no compromise is reached by Sunday.

On August 4 last year the Croatian army launched a blitzkrieg attack on Serb rebel positions and retook the Krajina region, which lies along the border with Bosnia.

About 200,000 Serbs fled, leaving only 10,000, mostly elderly, people too weak or poor to leave their villages. More than 200 were killed or disappeared in the months that followed as gangs of Croatian thugs roamed Krajina pillaging and burning Serb villages.

After an international uproar, the government increased the police presence in the area last October, but according to reports by the ICRC, HRW and the Croatian Helsinki Committee the threat to Serb survivors has not diminished.

Yesterday's ICRC report said: "Criminal acts and abuses continue to be carried out on a regular basis against the most vulnerable amongst the remaining [Serb] popula-

"There have been deaths caused by planted explosive devices"

tion and there has been no improvement noted in the protection situation... Returnees have had their houses burnt down in arson attacks and there have been serious injuries and deaths caused by deliberately planted explosive devices."

Francois Bellon, an ICRC spokesman in Belgrade, said: "In Krajina, there is what I would call soft terrorism."

The ICRC report, citing Croatian government figures, said 89 houses were destroyed by arson or explosives and 12 people killed. Yesterday's Human Rights Watch report said 30 Serbs were executed in Krajina between November and April.

"The scope and time-frame of the abuses indicate that the Croatian government both was aware of the killing, burning and looting and allowed it to continue with impunity," the HRW report said.

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# Priebke sows war crimes confusion

After the huge outcry over an Italian military court's ruling that the former SS officer could not be punished, **Ian Traynor** in Bonn reports on German attempts to extradite him and the implications for the future conduct of war tribunals

**T**HE legal limbo in which the former SS officer Erich Priebke sits, two days after an Italian court ruled him unpunishable despite his role in Italy's worst second world war atrocity, raises questions about the future conduct of war crimes trials.

Amid a chorus of condemnation from German Jews, Holocaust survivors and politicians, German authorities yesterday asked Italy to hold Priebke in custody pending extradition to Germany to face a new trial for murder.

But the fate of the 63-year-old, who admitted taking part in the 1944 massacre of 335 Italians, including 75 Jews, was shrouded in legal confusion after an Italian military court pronounced him guilty but ineligible for sentencing as his crime was covered by a statute of limitations.

Although still in Italian custody last night, Priebke was pronounced a "free man" on Thursday when the military court judges accepted the defence plea that the former Nazi was following orders when he compiled a list of 335 men and boys to be murdered in the Ardeatine caves outside Rome in 1944 in reprisal for the killing of 33 Germans by Italian partisans.

That ruling set off storms of protest across Europe and the United States yesterday and raised questions about the future conduct of war crimes

trials 51 years after the Holocaust.

Close observers of the complex legal and moral issues involved in war crimes trials also noted the unfortunate timing of the Italian verdict, as Dusan Tadic is being tried in The Hague for alleged war crimes in former Yugoslavia.

The Priebke case was the first such trial in Italy since the immediate post-war

**'This verdict is fatal for the future because ethically it excuses the murder of civilians'**

years. Like the former SS captain, countless war criminals from Nazi Germany and European satellites escaped to sanctuary in Latin America via Italy at the end of the war.

For campaigners for justice for the Nazis' victims the most disturbing aspect of the Priebke case was the judges' acceptance of the "following orders" defence, a ruling that flew in the face of the case history of Nazi war crimes trials.

"Even if an order is given, the command to kill a child is clearly inhuman, criminal, and has nothing to do with war," said Michel Friedmann,

a leading German Jew and lawyer. "If a court effectively approves such a killing, what are we supposed to do about kids being massacred in Yugoslavia?"

Simon Wiesenthal, the Vienna-based veteran Nazi-hunter, described the Italian verdict as "problematic". Ignatz Bubis, the leader of Germany's Jewish community, said the Italian court had dealt "a punch in the face to the victims."

But the court's ruling that Priebke's crime would go unpunished since it fell under Italy's statute of limitations, may strike a chord with British peers who fought to defeat Britain's first War Crimes Bill last year and were only overruled by the invocation for the first time in 40 years of the Parliament Act which got the bill on to the statute book.

Pierce resistance from the House of Lords, including from former Nuremberg prosecutors, cited the age of would-be defendants as one reason for letting matters rest and argued strongly that the War Crimes Act was pointless since it was being enacted 50 years after the Holocaust.

Nonetheless, no alleged war criminals have been tried in Britain although the first such trial, of 86-year-old Seymour Seratinowicz, of Surrey, is expected to go ahead in January. He is accused of murdering Jews in German-occupied Belarus during the second world war.

After the Nuremberg and Tokyo tribunals, most countries have been reluctant to pursue war criminals vigorously.

The wave of German prosecutions in the 1950s and 1960s are generally seen to have been less than comprehensive. The French only started to try to deal with war criminals in their midst in the 1980s with the trial of Klaus Barbie, the "butcher of Lyons". And Britain only last year passed legislation enabling it to prosecute war criminals resident in Britain, although few trials are likely to follow.

But while campaigners and legal experts deplored the Italian verdict on moral grounds, they generally agreed that the legal impact of

the ruling would be minimal, except in Italy. They also pointed out that unlike in Germany or most other countries, the Italians had chosen to bring the case before a military rather than a criminal court.

The quest to punish Priebke for crimes he admits he perpetrated and for which he shows little remorse now turns to Germany.

A formal extradition request from the Germans is expected in the coming days. But several legal hurdles need to be surmounted before the request can be regarded as valid and even then German justice sources admitted they may not be able to put him on trial.

The justice ministry of the German state of North-Rhine Westphalia yesterday asked the Italian authorities to keep Priebke in custody pending the response to an extradition request.

Priebke fled to Argentina at the end of the war, where he lived under his own name until earlier this year. Last year he admitted on television his part in the 1944 massacre, at which point Italy and Germany issued extradition requests.

But his dispatch to Italy for trial meant he could not be extradited to a third country for another trial. The German request has to be cleared by Argentina, which seems to be washing its hands of the affair.

But German sources said they were not sure whether or not Priebke had been acquitted by the Italian court. The "guilty but free" verdict possibly meant he had not been acquitted, in which case he could still be tried in Germany.

The Germans say they want to try him for murder, a crime for which there is no statute of limitation. But if Italian clarification follows that Priebke has been acquitted, the Germans cannot try him again.

Mr Friedmann said the issue of Nazi war crimes was as topical and urgent as ever. "We're not talking about the past. This verdict is fatal for today and tomorrow because ethically it excuses the murder of civilians."



Erich Priebke is escorted out of Rome's military court after the controversial ruling to acquit him of war crimes. He was re-arrested hours later. PHOTOGRAPH BY MASSIMO SANGUINETTI

**'If a court approves such a killing, what are we supposed to do about kids being massacred in Yugoslavia?'**

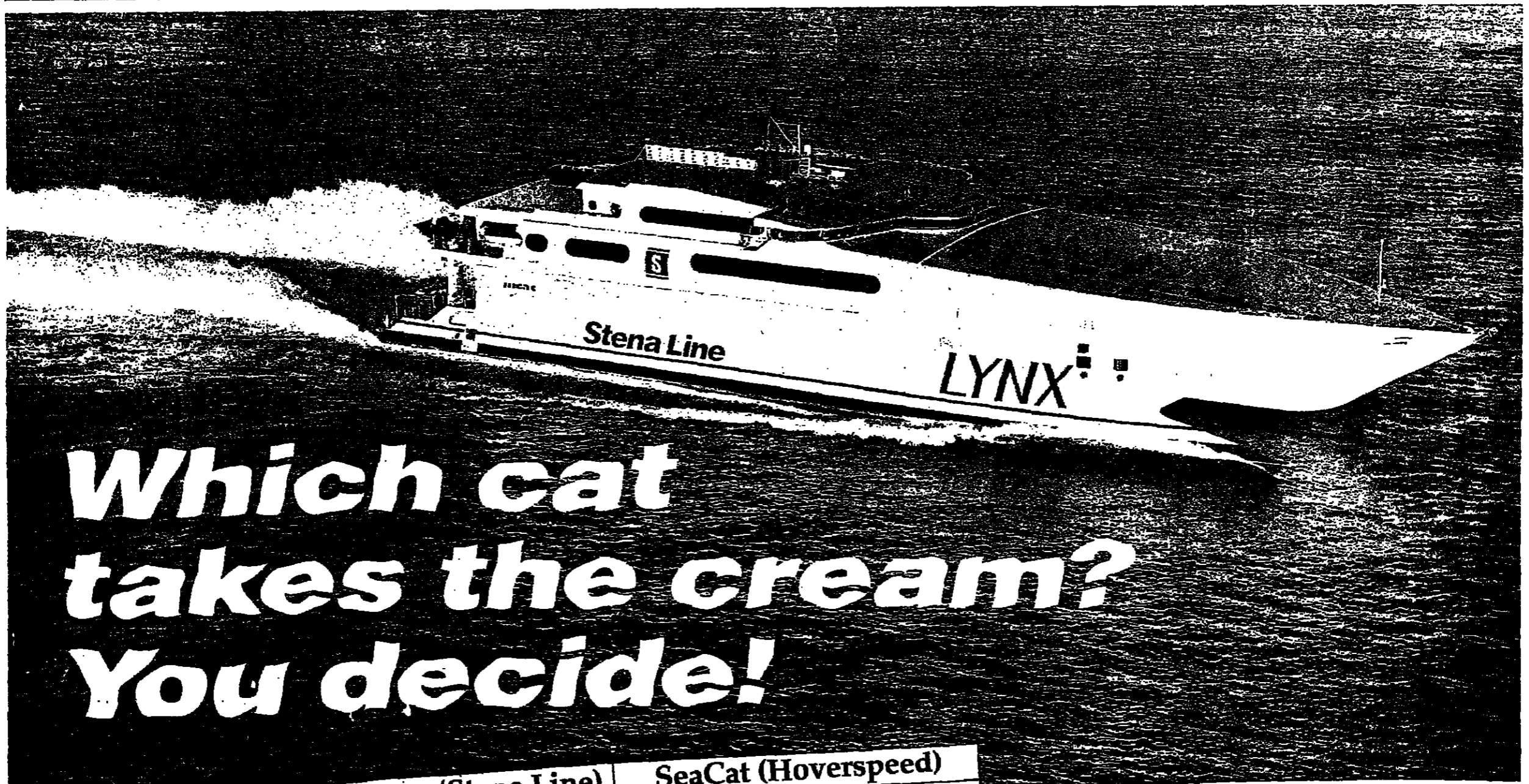
Michel Friedmann, a leading German Jew and lawyer

**'I feel bitter. I am convinced that I only did my duty and applied the law'**

Agostino Quistelli, presiding judge at the Italian court

**'We thought this was a chance to distinguish between military values on the one hand and criminal SS thuggery on the other'**

Shimon Samuels, international affairs director of the Simon Wiesenthal Centre



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Racing

Barron can double up with Bluff

Ron Cox expects Yorkshire raider to be quick on the draw in big sprint

COASTAL BLUFF, a son of the 1979 Stewards' Cup winner Standaan, has inherited not only his sire's colour but also his sprinting ability. David Barron's grey looks primed to give his trainer another triumph in today's Voe-sponsored handicap at Goodwood following the success of For The Present two years ago.

Emerging Market accounted for a host of today's rivals when providing a typical big-sprint result at 33-1 in the Wokingham at Royal Ascot. Helped by racing on the stands side that day, he had Coastal Bluff some way back in 13th place.



Spot on... Carmine Lake (left) gets the better of Connemara in yesterday's Molecomb Stakes at Goodwood

PHOTOGRAPH: GEORGE SELWYN

Oh brother... Hills leaves it late on Fahim

Chris Hawkins

WHILE the star of Michael Hills has been firmly in the ascendancy in the last few weeks, twin brother Richard's has been barely flickering and from August 9 it will be extinguished for seven days as he sits out a suspension imposed by the Goodwood stewards on Wednesday.

Fahim, backed down to 5-2 favourite for the Volvo Handicap, came from way back to snatch the prize in the last few strides and Alec Stewart, the trainer, feelingly described it as "a bad race to watch."

Stewart believes the ground was plenty firm enough for Fahim and commented: "This is a very good horse and he has been working really well but I trained the mother (Mahrah) who wanted it soft and I think Fahim will be a lot better with some give."

Two furlongs out as the colt came under pressure and found nothing. Connections were mystified by the flop of Topsy Creek, who beat only one home, and a non-plussed trainer Ben Hanbury commented: "Don't ask me, I've no idea. It takes lions, this game."

ty Arbib, got the better of a sustained duel with Mid-night Legend in the Schroders Glorious Handicap but is not rated in the same class as Arbib's record money-winning Snurge.

Richard Hannon, his trainer, admitted to surprise, saying: "At home you have to drag him and push him everywhere, he's the funniest horse."

Advertisement for Aqua Quorum fragrance collection. It features a central image of a gift box and several bottles of perfume. Text includes 'Your ocean YOUR GIFT The Aqua Quorum Challenge Collection' and details about the gift set contents.

Golf Juggernaut rolls in from Jutland Michael Britton in Gotenhavn THOMAS BJORN, a 35-year-old from Jutland, could become the first Danish winner on the European Tour after showing a clean pair of heels to the favourites in the Volvo Scandinavian Masters yesterday.

Soccer Ajax put £15m tag on Kluivert MANCHESTER United have been told by Ajax that they will have to pay an Alan Shearer-size fee of £15 million if they want to take the striker Patrick Kluivert to Old Trafford.

Table of weekend fixtures for Soccer, Rugby League, and Soccer Super League. It lists various teams and their scheduled matches.

Advertisement for The Racing Channel. It promotes a 'NEW SATURDAY ONLY SERVICE' with 'UP TO 3 MEETINGS LIVE ONLY £4.99 A MONTH WHEN YOU SUBSCRIBE BEFORE AUG 31ST'.

Handwritten Arabic text at the bottom of the page.





OLYMPIC GAMES

Christie left with no run after baton is dropped again

Athletics Stephen Bierley

LINFORD CHRISTIE'S hapless Games ended yesterday without him taking the track. It was another crushing blow to the British team as the 4x100 metres squad dropped the baton in the first round in sad reprise of the European championships in Helsinki two years ago...

The baton fell between two Darrens. Tony Jarrett, the lead-off man, had conveyed it safely to Braithwaite but Campbell on the third leg never got it...

That will not console Christie, who has signalled that this really is his last international season and had himself fouled up in the 100m final before going out in the second round of the 200m.

It is now up to Kelly Holmes and Steve Backley to attempt to lift Britain's sagging morale in the Olympic stadium this afternoon with medals in the women's 1500m and the men's javelin.

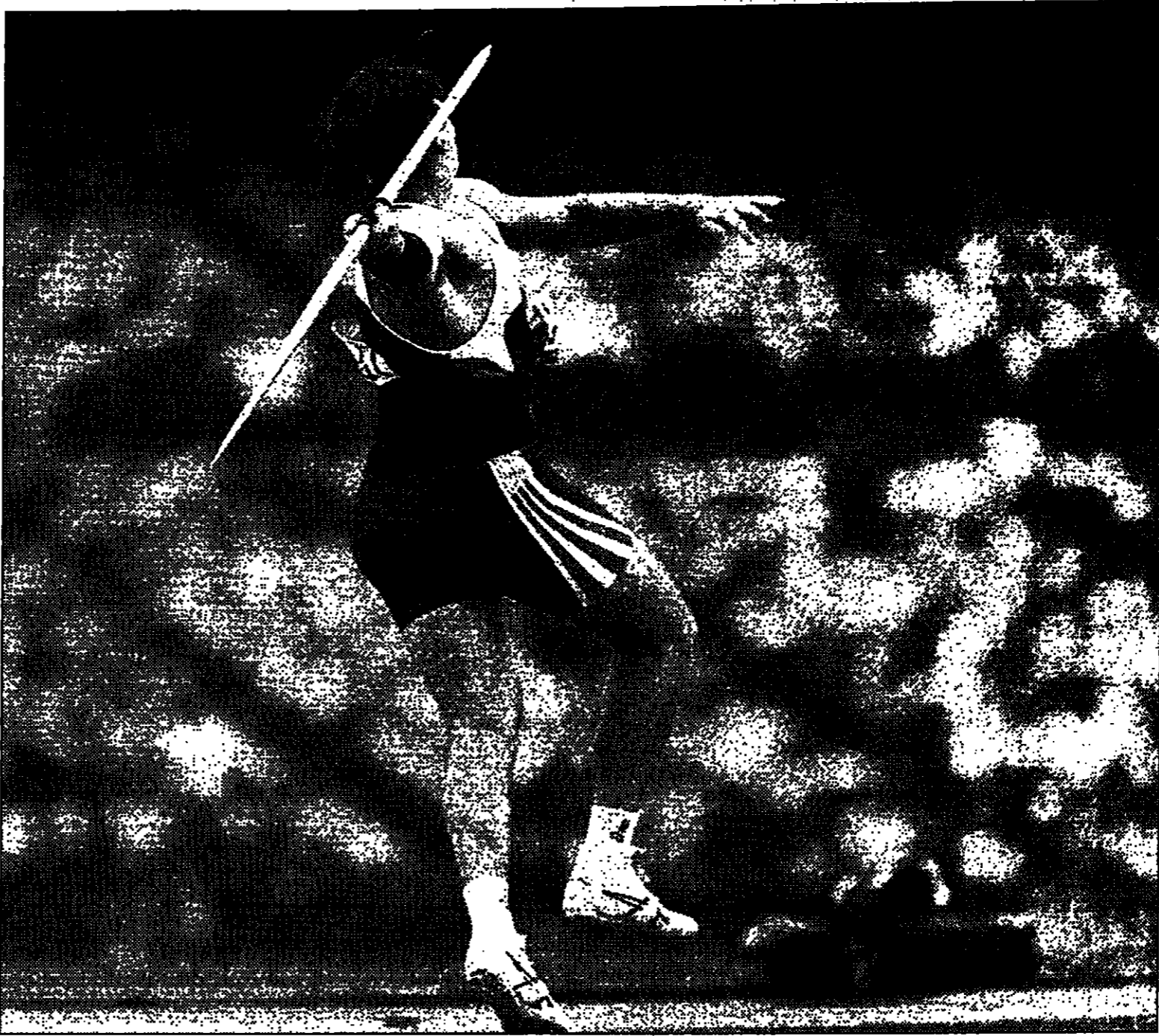
When Holmes revealed this week that her injury, picked up before the Games, was a hairline fracture above the left ankle... her, although presumably someone will try to push the pace before the final lap...

Backley almost failed to make it to Atlanta because of injury but his coach John Trower said yesterday that the former world-record holder and bronze-medal winner in Barcelona was "fit, well and raring to go"...

Marie-José Pérec's 200m-400m double on Thursday was every bit as noteworthy as Michael Johnson's but being French and a woman meant her achievement was largely underplayed.

Whether an athlete should take such a risk is debatable. Elliott did himself long-term damage; Holmes has been advised not to run but has chosen to ignore the advice.

Tatyana Kazankina of the former Soviet Union completed this double in Montreal 20 years ago and Masterkova has the kick finish to emulate



Spearhead... Steve Backley, qualifying yesterday, leads Britain's final quest for medals in the Olympic stadium today

MICHAEL STEELE

Hammer throwers' debt to Reidy's reckoning

Barry Fantoni meets the army captain who built the first concrete circle in 1943

DURING the summer of 1943, a herd of cows grazing in a field near the Sussex town of Walberton had more to worry about than BSE. A 16lb solid iron athletic hammer thrown by Captain Charles Reidy, an Irish rugby international, posed more of a threat to life and limb.

Left for dead himself six months earlier in a slit trench in Tunisia, the 31-year-old Reidy was using hammer throwing to put some strength back into his broken 6ft 5in frame. He would spend two or three hours each day

rebuilding his upper body, arm and leg muscles as well as regaining his confidence, after a doctor had told him that he would be fit only for basket-weaving and too much exercise would kill him.

But there was a snag. To be of much value, his routines needed to be consistent but the weather that summer was poor. After a sudden down-pour the farmer's field, like an athletic field, would quickly become a sheet of mud.

anything from 15 to 19 stone, was forced to adopt a skipping motion that frequently left him off balance at the point of release.

Reidy's solution was to find an all-weather material to replace grass and cinders. Having spent a year in the building trade, the answer was self-evident. He asked the farmer's permission, bought a bag of cement and made the first hammer circle.



Hammer and tongs... Reidy practises his art in Sussex

Thursday in Atlanta

Table with 2 columns: Event and Results. Includes Men's 200m, Men's 1500m, Men's 400m hurdles, Men's 5000m, Men's 100m hurdles, Archery, and other events.

Table with 2 columns: Event and Results. Includes Archery, Men's individual 70m, Waterweight (67kg), Middleweight (75kg), and other events.

Table with 2 columns: Event and Results. Includes Equestrianism, Team show jumping, Handball, Hockey, and other events.

Table with 2 columns: Event and Results. Includes Men's doubles, Men's classification, Volleyball, Yachting, and other events.

Large advertisement for Mercury featuring a stylized 'HOG THE FA' logo and the Mercury logo with phone number 0500 500 400. Includes a small image of a pig at the bottom.

Vertical advertisement for Boardman's featuring 'Socombe' and 'The best of the best' text, along with a large 'ST' logo at the bottom.



OLYMPIC GAMES: Britain's athletes struggle into the final weekend, page 10

BOXING: Savon all set to get back in gold routine, page 11

# Sports Guardian

## Search for British success is like Sneedling in a haystack



Jim White

IT HAS been the "and he's still in there, battling away in seventh place just trailing the Lithuanian" Olympics: the BBC has devoted 300 hours broadcasting to flop and failure to qualify. Des Lynam reduced to sug-

gesting we can all take pride in the fact the Italian gold medalist has a great-uncle who runs a sandwich bar in Scarborough.

Now it is about to finish, for the next couple of weeks the air-waves and newspapers will be filled with inquests as to why we are so crap at the Olympics.

John Major will blame left-wing councils, Tony Blair will blame parsimonious central government and the rest of the nation will order a take-away pizza, crack open a six-pack and flick to another channel on the remote control.

On television on Thursday night, David Moorcroft suggested that the Olympic post-

mortem season should be extended, so that real issues could be addressed and that something positive might emerge from Atlanta (apart from a drug test that strips our top weight-lifter of a hard earned 12th place in the clean-and-jerk).

Moorcroft, sadly, was being disingenuous. He knows full well more time cannot be devoted to the Olympic-inquiry season without it clashing badly with the why-can't-we-beat-anyone-at-cricket-self-flagellation season which itself merges seamlessly into the why-can't-any-of-our-football-clubs-win-in-Europe-any-more inquest season.

As the analysis has to be delivered quickly, therefore,

let's hope someone points out the fundamental reason why Britain will never achieve dominance in the Olympics: they include a load of sports we don't play.

Baseball, basketball, handball, that's three golds beyond us before you even mention softball, beach volleyball and that bizarre performance featuring half a dozen anorexic 14-year-olds bouncing around a sprung mattress while waving coloured streamers above their heads.

The only sport we in Britain can glean from such events is listening to our commentators, generally schooled in the hurry of the Premiership, struggling with the intricacies of some sport

they never even knew existed before they drew the short straw in the media village.

Gerald Sinstadt, for instance, gave a gold-medal performance at the kayak qualifiers on Thursday when he confidently told us that "the Pole's stroke index is now reaching 35".

Worse, not only are we excluded from half the competition, but many of the events in which we excel play no part in the Olympic fortnight.

Since the Americans seem able to introduce every insular, pointless sport they play in order to make their medal tally look ever more muscular, why don't our representatives to the IOC do something useful for the British morale and

lobby for inclusion of some of our own.

That doesn't mean cricket and rugby, no point giving the Australians yet more to gloat about. But imagine how different the national mood would be after a Stephen Hendry, John Parrot, Ronnie O'Sullivan medal sweep in the snooker singles. Or what a magnificent, uplifting sight it would be to see Nick Faldo, the Carl Lewis of golf, putting his way to a fourth successive gold, as Greg Norman crumples to silver in his wash.

We would be laughing in the darts, chortling all the way up the medal table in the crown-green bowls and would be able to show those unfairly

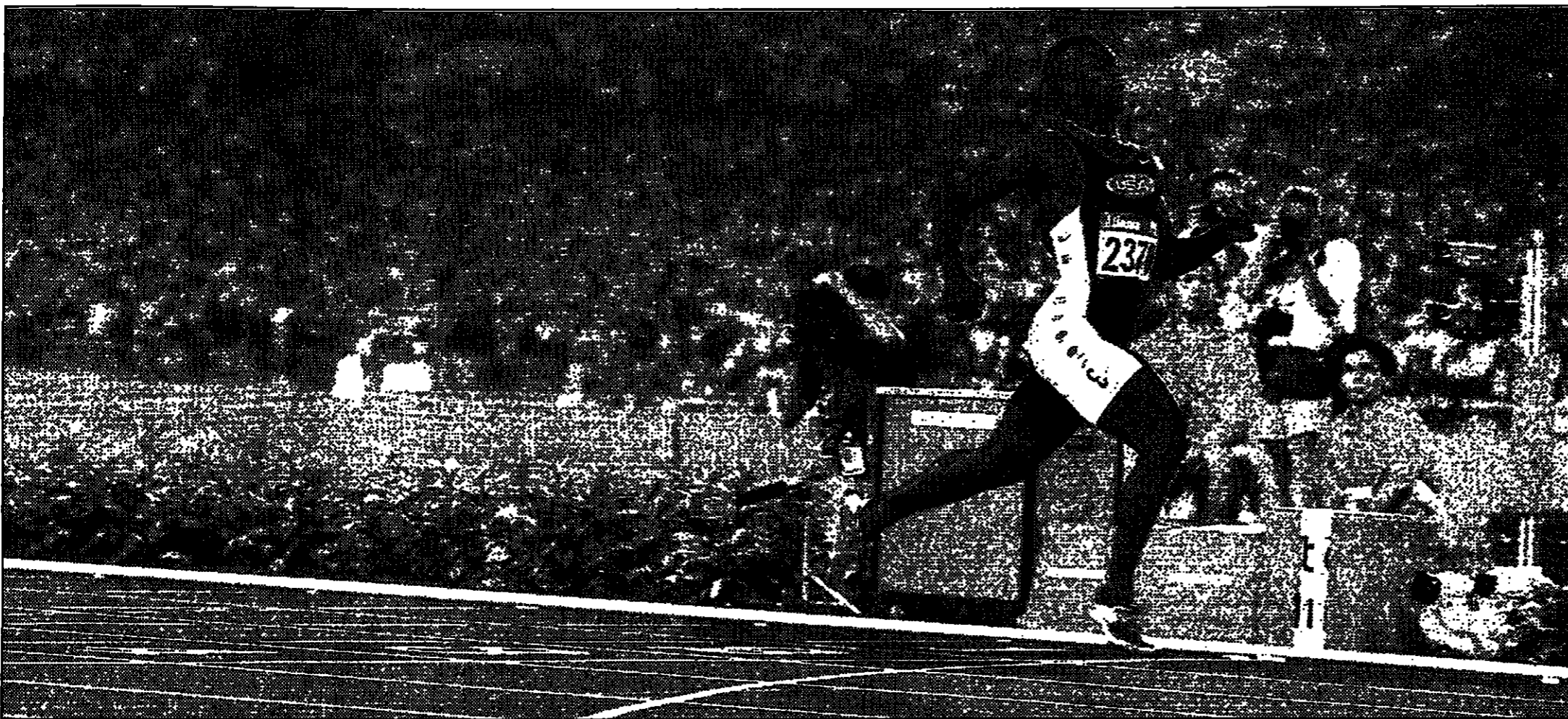
over-resourced Latvians who's boss in the sheepdog trials. Not to mention the Eton Wall Game. Or if that's too elitist, what about Sneedling the Boggin, or whatever that game involving the entire male population of two Lincolnshire villages, several hectares of liquid mud and a flaming beer barrel and played on the third Wednesday after Shrove Tuesday is called.

The trouble is, you get the feeling that were the British Olympic Committee able to side-step the American television networks and soft-drink manufacturers who now run the IOC and manage to have Sneedling instituted in time for Sydney 2000, it

might not make that much difference to our position in the final medal table.

The moment the news of its inclusion was leaked, you know full well that the French would have a municipal mud bath installed in every town, the Germans would have a national programme of excellence in place and Nike would announce a massive deal with the American Speedie Association ("Just wallow in it"). And the British team — the whole of Lymp-ton-Under-Satellite paying their own way to Australia through a series of sponsored bed-pushes — would be eliminated in the qualifying rounds of yet another sport we gave the world.

### OUT ON HIS OWN . . . THE SPRINT WONDER LEAVES HIS 200M RIVALS AND THE WORLD GASPING

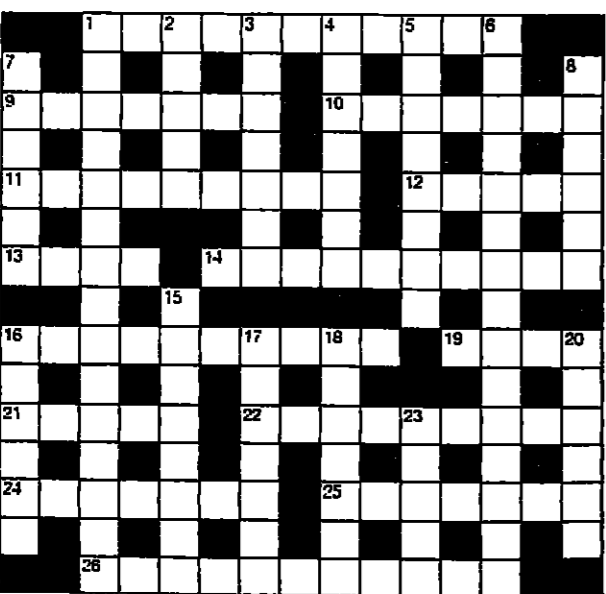


'I thought the man who wins the 100 is the fastest man alive. Not any more'

Frank Keating witnesses a Texan's unforgettable lone star triumph

## Atlanta belongs to Michael Johnson

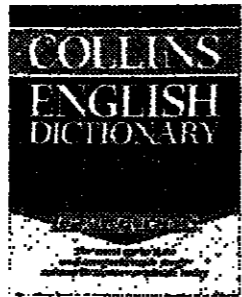
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11 SAILOR  
12 HE BROUGHT COLOUR TO ORIENTAL ISLAND  
13 CUSTOMER WITH A POLE  
14 JAG  
15 YOUNG LOVE  
16 CRIME WRITER  
17 MATHEMATICAL EXPRESSION  
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19 VOTE FOR ROCHE  
20 A LOT LESS FEELING  
21 MARK OF AFFECTION  
22 INCLINATION FOR TREADING CARELESSLY  
23 POP ARTIST  
24 SAILOR  
25 HE BROUGHT COLOUR TO ORIENTAL ISLAND  
26 CUSTOMER WITH A POLE

A YEAR before I was born there was Jesse Owens at Berlin. For obvious and retold reasons that hypenated resonance of the man and place will be twinned and twinned in the log for ever. In my lifetime, Blankers-Koen and London go together, and so do Zatopek and Helsinki in 1952. Spitz equals Munich, and Daley-Coe-Overt certainly go with Moscow like a horse and carriage. There was LA and Carl Lewis, and Ben Johnson, notoriously, at Seoul.

Another Johnson is garlanded with sport's laurel wreath in 1996. Ever remembered. The upright, sober-sided Texan has taken Georgia by storm. Victor Ludorum, and a phenomenal one at that. A man's gotta do... and he did just that. And that is the word. It is not the over-used one, "great" in the word is "phenomenal". In Italics, and underlined to boot.

Consider first, that Johnson laid to waste in his laid-back manner in this 200 metres such fancied dandies as Frankie Fredericks and Ato Boldon in shattering his own world record with an astounding 19.32sec. And that, had Johnson entered the 100m, he would more than likely on Saturday have slapped the world record winner Donovan Bailey into second place.

The first man to win gold medals in both the 200m and 400m at the same Games was to attempt to add another in the 4x400m relay but yesterday withdrew with hamstring injury. He had won 56 races on the trot in the 400m and had never lost an outdoor final at that distance. Before a minor glitch last month he had reeled off 21 consecutive victories in the 200m and has been ranked No 1 in the world at both events for four years, unprecedented. He was world champion in each event singly — the 200m at Tokyo five years ago and the 400m at Stuttgart in 1993 — and won them both in Sweden last year. There was a nice tribute from Derek Mills, the world's third-ranked 400m runner: "I keep trying to remember that Michael is just a man."

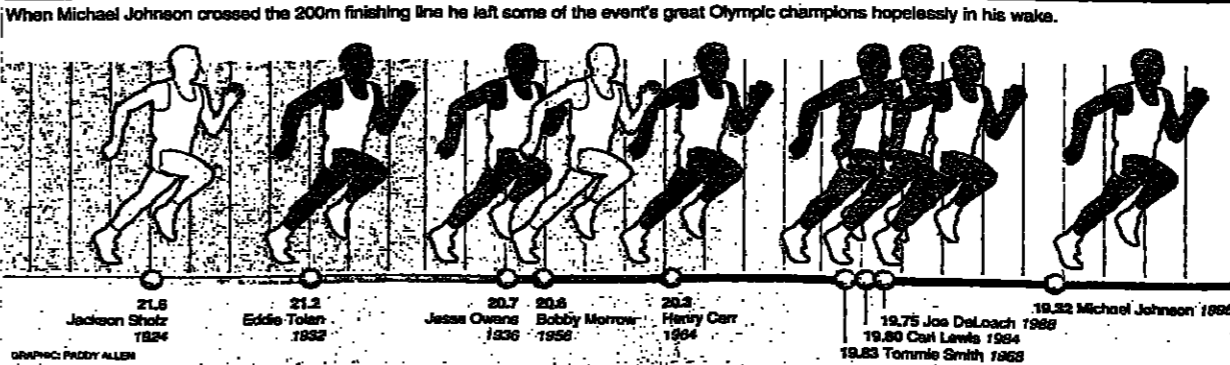
- Set by Araucaria
- Across**
- 1 Jag on a narrow gorge, the vehicle for 26 (7,4)
  - 9 Den for beast — turn back for mate? (7)
  - 10 Mosaic piece transposed for period novel (7)
  - 11 Frame of car that crashed — he initially bankrupted Lloyds (9)
  - 12,13 Preshave 19-ing, for a turning circle, possibly (9)
  - 14 How to stop a car, with notes — very wicked indeed (10)
  - 16 Awfully wet E stream on the point of merging with another (10)

- Down**
- 1 Sensational mistake — admit: mistaken don had to (5-3-7)
  - 2 Checks for dialysis? (5)
  - 3 Valerian, tool used by cobbler on part of shoe, we hear (3-4)

- 4 Mathematical expression — move it along (7)
- 5 Abuse without a point: you can't do it with a conductor (8)
- 6 Vote for Roche: claim result affected by varying charges (15)
- 7 A lot less feeling? (8)
- 8 Mark of affection for woman driver? (8)
- 15 Inclination for treading carelessly (8)
- 16 Pop artist fighting break (8)
- 17 Sailor, one entertained by Silas (7)
- 18 He brought colour to oriental island (7)
- 20 Customer with a pole? (8)

- 23 Small amount of truth in cat? (5)

### Where are they now?



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The women who you need now  
Now watch Big B G

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Saturday August 3  
Sunday August 4  
1996  
Page 13

# The Guardian Outlook

The women who wrecked a Hawk jet left a propaganda video in the cockpit. All you need now to start a revolution is a camera and laptop, says **MICHAEL WHITE**

## Now we're watching Big Brother

**G**ORGE ORWELL was famously right about the Soviet Union. But was he hopelessly wrong about describing the malign technologies which Big Brother would deploy to keep Winston Smith and the rest of us under constant surveillance in 1984 and beyond?

You do not have to be a wild optimist to shout "Yes, magnificently wrong!" as various disconnected events around the world have again shown this week. The events were typical of the battle between them and us, the politico-commercial powers that be and the citizenry.

The chief battleground is the Internet. But the four women peace campaigners who were acquitted in Liverpool Crown Court of inflicting £1.5 million worth of criminal damage — they had taken hammers to a British Aerospace Hawk "trainer" jet being sold to Indonesia — used a much more limited tool. They won their case, in part, because of the 15-minute videotape they left in the cockpit explaining the motives behind their action. The tape was played to the jury, which went on to acquit them.

For Orwell, dying of TB at a time when the world's few computers filled whole rooms with valves and cost fortunes, the idea that sophisticated video cameras might — within what could easily have been his own lifetime — be cheaply available to leftwing idealists would have been inconceivable. Far from being used as a weapon for the propagation of dictatorships, as Orwell feared, the reality is now often the opposite: Big Brother, We're Watching YOU!

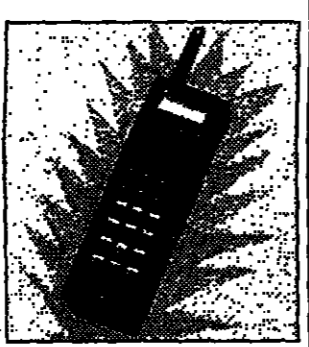
A video camera, hand-held by an onlooker, enabled Rodney King to prove that he had been brutally beaten by LA policemen. Without the video, a black ex-con's word stood no chance against theirs. Television professionals call such technology "amateur video" when they broadcast it on news programmes. But it is better than no technology at all. It was an amateur (of sorts) who caught Bill Clinton's Falls Road handshake with Gerry Adams: the White House didn't mean him to, but Sinn Féin did.

Video is just one aspect. As long ago as 1978, the Iranian revolution was helped by samizdat tape-recordings. Today, oppressive regimes the world over are faced with a range of subversive new technologies, as the military junta in Indonesia must be all too aware. In addition to that damaged Hawk jet, it was reported this week that middle-class Indonesian dissidents were keeping in touch by mobile phone. Their conversations were doubtless filled with gres-

slip and rumour mixed with fact, but that's one step forward from gossip and rumour in isolation.

But surely mobile phone calls can easily be intercepted, as every ex-royal princess knows? True, and they can be used to trace the whereabouts of the caller, much as telephone calls can be monitored and traced. What defeats the buggers, in every sense of the word, is the big and ever-increasing scale of modern communications.

Even with special software, designed to pick up key words like "Semtex" or "Mandelson", you can't bug them all. That is one of the many things which changed the nature of the Soviet Union without a shot being fired. If you run a society which requires a policeman to be stationed at every Xerox machine — in Romania typewriters had to be licensed — you can't run a modern society. The demand for information is too great.



**You can pick up satellite TV in Beijing with a wok. There are a billion woks in China**

Camcorders, mobile phones, Xeroxes... the list grows. Faxes, a relatively old technology which has belatedly come of age, enables people to communicate by letter more quickly than they could have in the late Victorian era, when there were three or more postal deliveries a day.

Satellite TV, cable TV... the list continues. In Hong Kong, one of those irrepressibly optimistic Shanghai-and-Harvard businessmen you meet (this one had torn up his US passport to prove his faith in the post-1997 future) told me that he was certain that intellectual freedom would soon prevail in China.

Why? "Because I could pick up satellite television in Beijing using a wok," he said. "There are one billion woks in China." He was rich and clever: I had no reason to doubt him. Had not poorly-received television signals been part of the invasion force

which broke down the Iron Curtain, the Berlin Wall, the Kremlin Wall even?

Rupert Murdoch, among others, modestly claimed to have played his part in carrying the torch of televisual liberty east of the Elbe. Yet the same Murdoch sold the troublesome South China Morning Post in Hong Kong and took BBC TV News off his Star satellite system in Asia, rather than offend Beijing. He did the same in New Delhi and Kuala Lumpur.

That is cause for gloom, but not for despair. For when all else fails — and as yet it hasn't — there is always the Internet, the development of which runs at such a pace that all but the most committed of anarchists have to keep up.

Most politicians, (and political correspondents), are especially Luddite, even when they are urging others to get wired. But they cannot escape the consequences of the world they have helped to create.

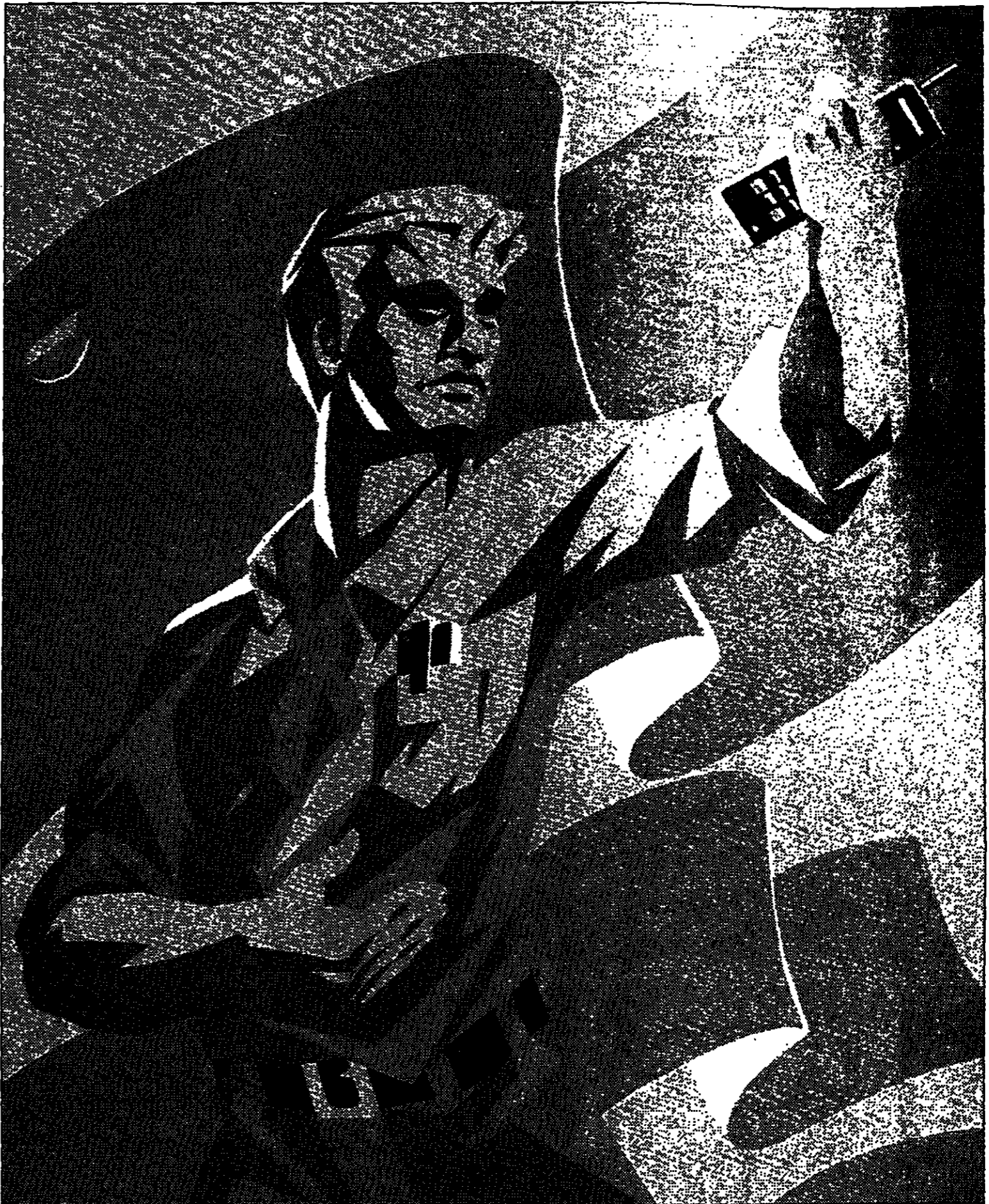
Thus, the other day, Michael Portillo found that a camera trained on his front door was hooked up to the Internet so that surfers around the world could see who was entering or leaving. As it happens, this was a stunt to publicise the Daily Planet, an Anglo-Dutch "news and entertainment" Web site.

The defence secretary's home had been chosen because he had just announced the £1.6 billion sale of other MoD married quarters. Yet when BT pulled the plug on the exercise, Nick Rosen, the Net guru behind the stunt switched it to a computer in Montreal within minutes — just to make the point that this stuff is virtually beyond regulation.

Similar exercises are less flippant, as even a cursory trawl through the electronic cuttings will show. The owner of a French cybercafé put on to the Internet an unauthorised biography of François Mitterrand which had been banned by the French authorities. Since France has muscular privacy laws, he was raided because he had made no attempt to render his political gesture anonymous — but not before thousands of people had downloaded the book.

Imagine how differently the spycatcher affair might have been played out if such technology had existed in the mid-1960s. As things were, would-be readers had to fly to New York — in real time — to buy the Viking edition of the book and evade the British ban.

In 1995, the ski-masked sub-commandante Marcos made his Zapatista revolt against the Mexican government a global event by tapping out his communiqués on a laptop. Copying them on to floppy disc, he put them into computer bulletin boards via old-fashioned courier. It is a technique increasingly familiar to



peace and environmental groups — anti-road GreenNet subscribers, for instance — to coordinate action.

The epic Mclibel case has acquired a global audience the same way. Besieged Sarajevo may have got its trains back only this week, but it stayed connected via the Net to the global village through the Serbian blockade, a reproach to ethnic cleansing and xenophobic radio, TV and press.

There is a downside to all this. The Atlanta bomber and the far-right militias which the US has spawned — encouraged, it must be said, by old-style talk radio, just like the 1980s — have access, too, and may download bomb technology information with as much ease as other Net-surfers find pornography.

Bill Clinton recently wondered aloud if Tokyo's Aum cult will spread its sarin gas

techniques in the same way. It is a miserable fact, documented by such bodies as PC-Meter Sweep, which monitors Web sites in the same way as ratings firms monitor TV, that home PC users flock to so-called "adult sites", such as Playboy and Hotsex, far more than they access the vast array of serious material. For \$5 a minute, using a video-conferencing PC, you (if you tend to be male, single and 30-ish) can interact with a naked model on the Web. There's money in that. Even in China, where PC users — a million by the year 2000 — must register with the government and promise not to break the law, the main sin is porn, not post-Flemington Square politics.

In the US, it is in this area that the doctrines of free speech and commerce clash most obviously with mainstream public taste and with government instincts to regulate. So far, the monks and the libertarians are winning and, unavoidably, the pornographers and the paedophiles.

There are problems with legitimate intellectual copyright and with illegal hacking and encryption software, all of which have national security as well as privacy implications. In most criminal cases, Rosen says, the cooperation needed between governments, police and Internet service providers to trace terrorists, money-launderers and child molesters is forthcoming. But they face a huge task. There was an outfit in Finland, for instance, which was willing to pass on anonymous e-mail for anyone — including sex maniacs. Finnish police eventually raided it. The group had provided the service on the basis of their libertarian principles, only to show that what most

new freedoms offer is freedom to abuse, steal or exploit.

More positively, US public documents are theoretically available on the Net, as are all corporate filings from the Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC), the Wall Street regulator. This means that private individuals can get information once available only to government and business.

The people who will make use of this opportunity are a well-heeled, well-educated elite. But this elite is essentially self-selective. The Net is more open to all corners than any system since Gutenberg first set up his printing press; it is far beyond the monopoly priests and witchdoctors once had on knowledge.

In emerging modern India, the impact of the new IT is already huge. In cash-strapped Africa, the potential is enormous. Questions about

the uses and extent of public information are beginning to be asked even in Britain.

The optimists believe in an information explosion on a scale beyond the reach of governments in Beijing, Jakarta or Whitehall. On the broad sunlit uplands of the global village, even the Orwellian threat of centralised computers linking government offices and ministries of justice worldwide is nothing compared with the untraceable cybercass of the First Virtual Bank, a trading mechanism that already exists.

Nick Rosen, his camera no longer trained on the Fortilios' door, is sanguine about the future. He calls IT "the biggest hand-back of power to the individual since universal suffrage". It was never like this at the Ministry of Truth.

ILLUSTRATION: IVAN ALLEN

A SOUVENIR



The MALT



The MACALLAN

TAKES ITS PLACE AT THE TOP OF THE WINNER'S PODIUM, THE RESULT OF MANY A TASTE TEST SUCCESS, SO IF YOU'RE IN SEARCH OF A PERSONAL BEST LOOK NO FURTHER THAN *The MALT*

**Greed out of control**

**S**ADLY WE HAVE become far too accustomed to watching the groovy train of privatisation gathering speed, but what is now happening to the railways almost beggars belief. In January, Porterbrook — one of the three leasing companies which purchased British Rail's 11,000-strong fleet of trains — paid £527 million for its share (3,774 trains) after an international, but hardly high-profile, auction had taken place. Porterbrook almost certainly got these assets on the cheap because the whole thing was conducted in great haste for political reasons and also because Porterbrook was sold to a company in which the existing management and employees had 20 per cent of the shares. In itself, that's fine. We are all in favour of encouraging employees to take a long-term stake in their companies, aren't we?

A £39.9 million bonus for its managing director, Sandy Anderson (a former BR terminal manager) and multi-millionaire status for two of his fellow directors. Forgive us if we sound old-fashioned, but wouldn't that unearned £30 million gain — more than BR usually makes in a year — have been better employed on something more useful, like badly-needed investment in the railways? It is not as if the new owners have performed some management magic on their trains. There has been no new investment and 80 per cent of the revenues on which they have made such a disgraceful profit are actually guaranteed by the taxpayer. And who are they selling out to? Why, to Stagecoach, which already has 17 per cent of the national bus market and is hungry for expansion! Stagecoach already operates one of the big rail franchises (ie operating a service as opposed to leasing the trains) out of Waterloo, and has put in a bid for all of the remaining 12 unallocated franchises. Privatisation was supposed to be all about breaking the railways up into smaller, competing units — but now Stagecoach is trying to put Humpty Dumpty together again.

A key question is why the Porterbrook franchise is suddenly worth £300 million more than it was seven months ago. Either the expensively paid City bankers got their valuation wrong (in which case has the taxpayer any redress?) or the assets are worth more to Stagecoach — because it is a brilliant spotter of opportunities or it is in a position to exploit a growing monopolistic position. It is true that the leasing companies have suddenly realised they can convert their debts into cheaper financial instruments by securing them against future revenue streams (guaranteed by the taxpayer, remember) but surely we didn't privatise in order to get the benefits of nationalisation? Also, Stagecoach told the Financial Times it could reduce Porterbrook's spending on maintenance by up to 30 per cent. That should go down well with passengers.

**Financing the flicks**

**WHY ISN'T** the British film industry a success? This may seem a strange question when over the past 20 years almost one in three Oscars has gone to British artists, but the films — even if the actors, director and crew are British — are American. Go to any cinema and check; nine out of 10 films in British cinemas come from Hollywood. This is not the inevitable result of the US dominating world popular culture. Lack of finance, not lack of talent, prevents British cinema from becoming a world leader. Government investment is needed to start the ball rolling.

This is made clear by the National Heritage advisory committee report on the British film industry. Virginia Bottomley went so far as to call this a "thoughtful contribution". That's very nice, but firm commitment is required. First, the Treasury should agree to encourage domestic film production through tax breaks, as the report recommends. British film-makers should be able to write off production costs in the year they are incurred against tax. Tax relief played a vital role in the growth of the US film industry and could do the same for Britain. More difficult is the need identified for structural change to create companies big enough to produce and distribute British films. Too often film rights are sold in advance to fund production — take *Four Weddings and A Funeral* or *Sense and Sensibility* — and the box office returns go to the big American players, rather than back to the makers. The big profits that could fund the next project are lost for the want of cash up front. The report proposes the creation of three distribution studios, big enough to combine production and distribution as the Hollywood companies do, and able to build up a slate of films to spread the risk. The idea is a good one, the problem is it would take money. At present the Government puts just £25 million into the industry to support film schools, and there is no direct support for actual production. The Arts Council has no earmarked sum to create big distribution studios. The lottery money allocation is just £70 million for production, and £40 million for distribution, over the next five years. This is a pittance. ITV is planning to spend over £100 million in the same period to challenge Channel 4 and the BBC in film-making.

**MARTIN WOOLLACOTT argues that the outrages of Atlanta and TWA 800 have shattered the peculiarly American fantasy that they face a unified clandestine force.**

**Exploding the myth of terrorism**

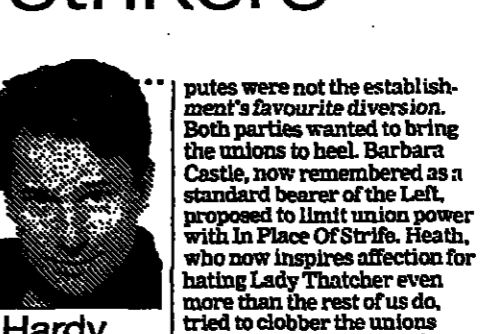


**T**HE reaction to the bombings that have terrified and angered Americans in recent weeks may, paradoxically, mark the end of the "Age of Terrorism" as we have experienced it over the last quarter of a century. Not the end of bombing or other clandestine violence directed against western governments — both, unhappily, are likely to continue. But the end of the idea that terrorism is a single phenomenon, and that it is best opposed by an organised international response aimed at centres of power, is in sight. This is an idea that has become, if it was not always, an obstacle to clear thinking about modern violence. Events since the TWA 800 disaster and the Atlanta bomb demonstrate that while the idea of terrorism is still a great generator of rhetoric, it is no longer a basis for effective action even domestically and has lost most of its capacity to mobilise the international community. The congressional task force created to draft new measures against terrorism is already in some disarray over their necessity, while the Americans did not even try at the Paris summit earlier this week to secure European agreement for their objective of isolating five "terrorist" states. Indeed the United States and the European Union, rather than preparing common sanctions against Cuba, Libya, or Iraq, are in fact preparing sanctions against each other after American legislation proposed penalties in US courts, under cer-

tain circumstances, for non-American companies trading with those countries. The evident friction is an example of what happens when the attempt is made to translate a psychologically satisfying but unbalanced political concept into action and policy. President Clinton has said that the most significant security challenge of the 21st century. He has told Americans, "We can't let terror win. That is not the American way." Louis Fresh, the director of the FBI, said in evidence to Congress that the US faces an "increasing war" against "its interests both here and in the world". Ladies and gentlemen, in the right hand corner, the United States of America, in the left hand corner, Terrorism. It is possible that Americans will for a while continue to enter into this sloppy dramatisation, but Europeans will no longer do so. That is not because Europeans know nothing about bombs — they have had far more of them than America has. Nor is it because European countries foolishly put their commercial interests before international security, although they undoubtedly have sometimes done so. It is because they now reject the American fantasy that there is a single force called terrorism supported and largely sustained by certain states which can be dealt with by economic and sometimes military action against those states. In his study of the militarisation of the US, In The Shadow Of War, the historian Martin Sherry argues that, when real war receded as a

possibility, Americans, "a people so accustomed to war of some sort that its cessation seemed almost unimaginable", looked around for substitutes. They found them in crime, in drugs, and especially in terrorism. Ronald Reagan, strongly supported by Margaret Thatcher, fought a war against terrorism which included its own government, the coolest and most lucid treatment of the subject, defined it as violent action by small groups, for political ends, against western governments in the period from the late sixties to the end of the cold war. These groups were marginal and almost always unsuccessful. Their campaigns never represented more than a very low level of political violence in what were and are unusually peaceful societies. Very few people died by the standards of the wars that afflicted the rest of the world. Such violent action was always diverse and had long existed, as had most of the means employed. The first major use of the bomb by Irish rebels, for instance, was in a jailbreak in Clerkenwell, in the 1870s, not far from this newspaper's offices. But terrorism emerged when modern communications, especially television, dramatised "the western public's... vul-

**Time out for strikers**



nerability to political violence emanating from other societies". There was a sense of alarm and outrage and a tendency to both exaggerate the impact of terrorism and to see a unity in terrorist action that never existed. None of this means that violent movements should not have been, or should not now be, opposed by force when necessary. But in practice, the best ways of dealing with them have proved to be specific rather than general, flexible rather than draconian, and national rather than international. The work of co-ordinating international and domestic law has been largely completed, as, with few loopholes still to be closed, has been that of co-ordinating security measures in international transport. But, as Guelka points out, terrorism does not usually end because it is directly defeated, whether by international or national measures. It ends because circumstances change, because offers are made, or because the terrorists themselves decide that their objectives are not attainable. Anti-terrorism was in a sense more

But the watchword of New Labour is respectability, and striking is just not respectable. It involves confrontation. It demonstrates with uncomfortable clarity that the interests of employer and employee are not the same. It politicises people. It gives them confidence and power over their lives. It shows them that business and government are not all powerful. It encourages them not to just vote Labour, sit back and think that everything will be all right.

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**In the right hand corner, the United States of America, in the left hand corner, Terrorism**

real than terrorism. The bombs and the guns are, of course, all too real but they have been or are in the hands of very different groups with very different aspirations. Anti-terrorism on the other hand is a single ideology. Popular outrage during the 1960s needs of western governments have coincided. The latter seized on a concept that would cover all challenges to the international and domestic orders they had created. Terrorism was a rag-bag into which almost any violent opponent could be stuffed. Individual governments also found the concept of a general terrorist enemy very useful in depriving their own specific enemies of sympathy or support they might otherwise have enjoyed in other western countries. These trade-offs continue today, when Russia, for instance, legitimises its war in Chechnya by bringing it into the anti-terrorist consensus at international meetings. The US, facing some violent opponents in the Middle East and, perhaps, its own homegrown extremists, is tempted to revive the anti-terrorism of the past, but is unlikely to be able to do so. Terror will go on, but terrorism, as a unifying and mobilising idea, has had its day.

**Smallweed**



ONE sun, said GK Chesterton, is sublime: two suns would be merely vulgar. I used to think the same about my favourite building, Leeds Town Hall. But now it ap-

pears there are two Leeds suns: one in Leeds, and one in Australia. The city has been approached by the parliament of the state of Victoria to furnish it with the plans of Cuthbert Broderick's Yorkshire Hall in order that its building can be completed as part of a £40 million refurbishment programme. At present it lacks the crowning glory of Leeds's tower and dome. In all other respects, said the message from Melbourne, the buildings were almost identical. Peter Kerr, a Scottish emigré architect, won the competition in Melbourne, it's alleged, by submitting the plans of Leeds town hall as all his own work. He also claimed to have designed the Houses of Parliament. I owe these revelations to the Yorkshire Post. Out of gratitude, I have decided not to mention that this

newspaper last Saturday carried a picture on page one of "Sir Geoffrey Boycott" leaving the Botham/Lamb/Imran extravaganza. Sorry, Leeds; but the Palace has still not got round to it. **W**HY, when someone sneezes, do others say: "Bless you"? According to a newly-published Dictionary of Superstitions (Casell, £9.95) it's because early Christians believed you lost part of your soul when you sneezed. The way to recapture it was for someone to bless you. Having always believed it had something to do with the plague, I found this surprising. So I turned to further enlightenment to Dr Brewer's Reader's Handbook Of Allusions, References, Plots And Stories. "A person who sneezes," it then explains, "was at one time supposed

to deal with that problem. In Smallweed's experience, just two rules are necessary: 1) Arm yourself with a suitable oniglet, bludgeon, knobkerrie, shillelagh or truncheon. 2) Stand over your Arzoo, brandishing the above, and ordering, kindly but firmly: "Get quitting, goddamn it, or else..." You will find the fellow will very soon get the nub of your grit. **S**MALLWEED expects an arrest any day now. In the case of the stones at Avebury, which in June this year were daubed with what appeared to be Norse symbols. The likely culprit, the police have been told, is a 5ft 9in white male bisexual vegetarian from the professional classes with a goatee beard and a twitching right eye. The information has been furnished by a coven of

witches in Hastings. Perhaps this group could now produce an identikit picture of the persons or aliens who have recently resumed the practice of peppering the Whiteacre countryside with corn circles. Smallweed's own suspicions are based on the ancient judicial principle known as *cul bovo* (who benefits). It's significant, you may think, that local ne'er-do-wells have been doing a lively trade robbing the cars which come to see the crop circles. I can also warn Atlanta police that they're wasting their time on their present investigations. According to Ambrose Evans Pritchard of the Sunday Telegraph, it's unlikely that far-right groups in America would target an occasion like the Olympics. The fact that the caller who warned of the bomb had an American accent proves little. "It is equally possible," E-P opines, "that the attack was carried out by a radical Middle-Eastern group, perhaps linked to terrorist mastermind Ramsi Yousef." **A** Dr Bulruddery writes: There is something wrong here. You have quoted a story by Ambrose Evans Pritchard which at no point impugns President Clinton. I put it to you that this report is a forgery, perpetrated by a) a dodgy Australian architect or b) a 5ft 9in white male bisexual stermung vegetarian from the professional classes with a goatee beard and a twitching right eye. **A** SHONOURABLE members know, for 1989-90, the slaughter will be voluntary — Douglas Hoeg, Commons statement on BSE.

Smallweed



The ultimate deterrent... the only defence against a crew member trying to sabotage the missile firing on a Trident submarine is a wooden baton gripped by a guard. A commander says it is 'a simple and cheap answer to defend a \$900-million submarine'

# Cosh! This baton is our last line of defence

Trident has cost billions, but, incredibly, amid the hi-tech hardware a man with a stick is the final guard against nuclear war. PETER TAYLOR reports

YOU can't say where it is, insisted the Ministry of Defence security officer. "But you can say it's somewhere beneath Whitehall." I was standing in the video conference room of the Joint Operations Centre (JOC), the underground command bunker that was Mrs Thatcher's controversial post-Falklands legacy. It's protected against nuclear attack and access to it is via an array of security checks, armed guards and blast-proof steel doors. The tunnels are linked to the Cabinet Office and Number 10 and the control rooms are lined with computers operated by military personnel. Every year, there is a dress rehearsal here for nuclear war, as the secretary of state for defence chairs a meeting of the Nuclear Briefing Committee. Around the table sit the men who will advise him: the chief of the defence staff, the chiefs of the army, navy and air force and the permanent under secretary. The defence secretary conveys the collective advice to the War Cabinet, which in turn advises the prime minister. The final decision to launch a nuclear strike is the prime minister's alone. After 1988, the RAF's nuclear bombs will have been phased out. But that will still leave Trident 1 D3 missiles which could still theoretically be launched if the trigger were squeezed on board one of Britain's four Trident submarines. HMS Vanguard and HMS Victorious are now in service, and Vigilant and Vengeance will be operational by the turn of the century. Each submarine carries up to 16 missiles with a range of more than 6,000 kilometres. Each missile can be fitted with up to 12 independently targeted nuclear warheads, each with an explosive power five times that of the bomb that flattened Hiroshima. The firing chain that triggers the launch is the most rigorous of Whitehall procedures. The

signal goes from the prime minister to the Fleet's commander in chief at Navy Headquarters, Northwood, who has electronic communication with whichever Trident submarine is at sea. On board, the encoded signal is intercepted by the weapons officer and the captain's second-in-command. At every stage, two officers double-check every detail in a process known as "duality" to minimise the risk of human error. They then take the signal from the wireless office to the control room. Tucked away in a corner is a grey metal box that looks like a second-hand filing cabinet. Inside this nuclear safe, the combination of which the weapons officer has memorised, are the codes against which the signal from London is checked. The only defence against any crew member trying to sabotage the firing is a wooden baton gripped by a guard. As we were filming on board HMS Victorious for an upcoming BBC series that takes a behind-the-scenes look at the MoD, I pointed out to the captain of the ship, Commander "Josy" Powis, that the defence system was scarcely high-tech. "It's a simple and cheap answer which defends a \$900-million submarine and its weapons system," he replied drily. The wooden baton is certainly the cheapest item in the Trident budget. According to the MoD's latest figures, the total cost of the Trident programme is a staggering £12.15 billion. One of the few sequences it proved difficult to film in HMS Victorious's emergency role play was the fate of any crew member who might try to sabotage the firing. In Hollywood the object would have been shot; in the ministry's plans he would be restrained and shut up in a cupboard. The two officers then disappear behind a black curtain and go into a huddle to check the signal from London against the codes from the safe. The captain joins them to triple-check the signal is for real. Satisfied of its authenticity, he then turns the signal into "a release

time" and "target" plan. In the missile control centre, the weapons officer, again with a memorised combination, unlocks the safe on the wall and extracts the firing mechanism—a red gun butt that looks like a toy racing car control. When all is ready, the captain inserts the key in the console before him, turns it to activate the firing system and gives the order: "You have my permission to fire." The weapons officer squeezes the trigger and the submarine echoes to a dull thud as the 60-ton missile rises out of its tube. Commander Powis is a man of many parts. Besides potentially holding the fate of the world in his hands, he's a Mensa Mastermind finalist, an opera buff and railway fanatic who builds model engines when he's at sea and not reading Crime And Punishment or learning Japanese. He would have no hesitation in giving the order to fire should the signal ever come for real. "I have to do it," he says. "There's no point in having nuclear weapons if you're not prepared to use them." He means it. I asked other members of the crew what they would do if the signal ever came. One said he'd just lie under the beer keg, open his mouth and turn on the tap. Another said he'd retire to a quiet place, lie on his bunk and think of his family.

With only one exception, a submariner who thought the whole thing was a total waste of money, all members of the crew we spoke to had few qualms about their work. But many admitted they'd never really thought about the consequences because the consequences were unthinkable. To the MoD, targeting is a highly sensitive issue. The raison d'être of Britain's Trident programme in 1980 was to protect the country with a strategic missile system that would penetrate Moscow's defences—The Moscow Criterion. No one foresaw the cold war would end. Suddenly Trident seemed redundant, a hugely expensive insurance policy with no enemy in sight. In the new atmosphere, John Major and Boris Yeltsin agreed to "de-target" their strategic missiles so Moscow and Londoners could sleep soundly. But this left the MoD with a problem. Having spent billions on Trident and more billions on Cr-



The ultimate deterrent... the only defence against a crew member trying to sabotage the missile firing on a Trident submarine is a wooden baton gripped by a guard. A commander says it is 'a simple and cheap answer to defend a \$900-million submarine'

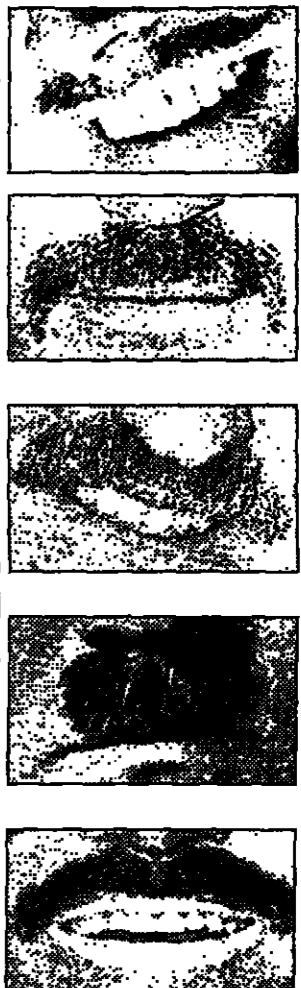
# Nose brush with the law

Why did Beefy and Lamby lose that court case? JONATHAN MARGOLIS has a hair-raising theory

WE MAY never know how the jury in the Imran Khan versus Ian Botham and Allan Lamb libel case reached its verdict; but it is possible that its decision in the Pakistani's favour and against the home-grown "Beefy" and "Lamby" was swayed by a reaction against their moustaches? Could this, indeed, be the moment for all moustache wearers to reconsider their facial arrangements? Let me first define what I mean by moustache. I am not referring to the often pleasing ruggedness of a decent, neither too-shaggy, nor too-trimmed, beard and moustache. Neither, of course, am I even countenancing the pervert special, that horror movie prop, the moustache-less beard, which acts usefully for its wearers as a recognised diploma of insanity. The moustache in the dock is the British bloke's version, the slightly aggressive, carefully trimmed little nose brush, that droops down a regulation half an inch or so with the curve of the mouth to differentiate it from a Hitler, Stalin or a Basil Fawley. The Botham/Lamb moustache—they share the identical design—is the secondary sexual characteristic of choice for plainclothes policemen trying to look cool, for pilots with immaculately pressed shirts and over-nerve the knots, but lacking the balls to go for the full Damocles handlebar job. And, let us not forget, for homosexual men. I would not want to accuse the High Court jury of homophobia, and even less to suggest that Beefy, Lamby (or, by implication sportsmen like David Seaman and Nigel Mansell) are gay, which would go down very badly in their world and probably land us, following Imran's example, in the High Court. They do, however, happen to have moustaches of a style not dissimilar from that beloved of gay men, while Imran does not. And Imran did, a little unexpectedly, win the libel case. It's not quite QED, but you have to wonder, don't you?

The curious thing about the bloke's bloke moustache is that as far as I can tell, no woman in recorded history has ever liked it. They will snog it all right—ask David Niven, or even Mrs Botham and Mrs Lamb—but among themselves, women regard such a moustache as an unfortunate by-product of malehood, like competitive burping, or farting in bed, only slightly less attractive. Why, then, do the likes of Botham and Lamb wear it, when it makes them look either gay or like Detective Sergeant in the RUC, and does nothing particular for the opposite sex? Is it perversion? Or bravery? With the help of a degree I just awarded myself in the semantics of personal grooming (self-assessed) of the University of Ilford) I believe I have found an answer. The Botham/Lamb moustache is not designed to attract women or men. It is the human equivalent of those last patches of scrotal fur certain male monkeys display on their bottom. Its purpose is not to impress fe-

## Man and moustache



Well groomed, or big droops? Can you name the owners of the moustaches above? from the salons of Karachi and Lahore, the two principle outward signs of malehood are a big Kalashnikov and a ferocious moustache. While the High Court jury in London, especially the five women on it, may have judged Imran more of a chap, or at least less of an oak, because he is clean-shaven, back home, his lack of moustache could have worked against him. Facial hair, like justice, is fickle stuff. Fact file: ... the moustaches of Imran (top left), Cliff Gable, Ian Botham, Des Lynn, and Adolf Hitler and Allan Lamb.

# I'm not sure... and certainly I could be wrong about this

**Martin Kettle** Like most other people, I do not wish to think of myself as a morally defective person. Although I adhere to no religion and never have done, I hope I could satisfy a court of my peers—or even of my betters—that I know the difference between right and wrong or good and evil. Like most people of my acquaintance, I believe I have generally decent values which underlie self-deception or priggishness, to apply with a reasonable approximation of consistency. I think of myself

as a moral liberal with conservative tendencies, though occasionally these days I sense that it may be more the other way around than it used to be. But I know what it is to be outraged and the feeling of indignation is certainly not foreign to my nature. I possess, in short, what I consider to be a moral compass in tolerable working order. Why is it then, that I simply do not share the intensity which afflicts so many others when they confront the fate of a fridge-full of tiny human embryos? I understand, at some philosophical level or other, the issues which grip other people. But I am not as emotionally seized by these questions as they are. I cannot equate the embryos with the authoritative passion, outlook and language of which some people are impressively capable. To speak of the dilemmas posed by their existence as matters of life and death is to use language which I simply do not understand in this context.

Naturally, I am both interested and concerned when people whom I respect express intense opinions which I cannot share. But in the end I still don't get it. These principles of life do not engage my conscience to the degree which they do to other people. I feel about the embryos much as I do about eating oysters, a bit squeamish but not insuperably so. If it fell to me to have to flush the embryos down the loo, or whatever it is that happens to them, I would do it without feeling guilty. Such an action would not, in my view, make me the moral equivalent of Erich Priebke, the former SS captain who was acquitted in Rome this week of a mass murder of Italians in 1944. But it is fairly clear that some people would find the distinction impossible to draw. I find the difference between these two perceptions extraordinary and distressing. To me, the gulf between the treatment of the minuscule embryos and the shooting of the Italian martyrs is so overwhelmingly obvious as to be barely worth elaborating in intelligent company. Yet to others this is merely a particularly stark piece of moral relativism of the kind which they deem to be corrupting the future of mankind. None of this means that I am enthusiastic about embryology or about the creation of a modern empire of medical research into human infertility. By and large, I think I am opposed to experimentation with and on embryos. My instinct is that the reproductive process ought in general to be left alone, on grounds of prudence rather than principle, though I am very uncomfortably aware that very close friends have achieved immense happiness from the fact that my views do not hold sway. I do not believe that human beings should refrain from interfering with "nature" in general, and it is obvious to me from only a nano-second of thought that such a position would ridicule the whole

course of human history. Nevertheless, I do not see that there is a human right to have children, and I am extremely uneasy about anything which involves medical scientists creating life or attempting to purify the human stock, even from the best of motives. A goal-scorer who doesn't score goals tends to get dropped from the team sharpish I have, in other words, a mixture of views. I am certain of some of them, and less sure of others. Some are consistent with one another, while many are undoubtedly not. I accept unreservedly that there are large gaps in my knowledge and understanding, not to say also in my moral sense. Under cross-examination or emo-

tional pressure I can confidently say that I would change my mind about some of my attitudes. I suspect, though I do not know this for certain, that the jumble of instincts, thoughts and beliefs I am expressing are typical of many people, and perhaps of rather more people than such apparent certainty. I am not, however, a congenital relativist. When I am asked for my opinion about the privatisation of the railways, to take the first example which comes into my head, I can give a clear answer. I am opposed to it on all grounds and, even though privatisation may have produced some incidental benefits which I would wish to retain and though the cost of reversing it would be large, I want it reversed nonetheless. When I am asked for my opinion about embryos, however, I falter. And in faltering, I am fairly sure, I am neither alone nor wrong. I wonder whether this is be-

cause I do not really have an opinion about the embryos at all. What I do have are views, and having views is rather different from having an opinion. Maybe it is a bogus distinction, but it still seems to me that there are some questions on which views are much more important than an opinion. Views to me are exploratory, incomplete and subject to constant modification. They are embodied in conversation and discussion and do not pretend to completeness. Whereas opinions are lawyers' and priests' things, definitive, climactic and conclusive in the arbitrarily stayed manner of all things that are written down. A wise scholar once told me long ago, as I struggled with a particularly complex thought, that "uncertainty is the hallmark of true intelligence". I admit that I fell for this flattering accolade to my teenage confusions and have always clung to the hope that it may be so. The implied tentative-

ness of all conclusions remains with me to this day. Just about my favourite quotation in all our history is Cromwell's remark to the Church of Scotland: "I beseech you, in the bowels of Christ, think it possible you may be mistaken" and I was glad to read recently that Karl Marx's favourite motto was "De omnibus dubitandum" (which does not mean "Never rely on the buses"). I have always had a soft spot for Arthur Ballfour on account of his authorship of A Defence Of Philosophic Doubt; there, I feel, was my kind of politician. When you are employed by an editor to have opinions, it is hard not to feel a pricking of anxiety about admitting to not having one. After all, a goal-scorer who doesn't score goals tends to get dropped from the team pretty sharpish. By the same token, an opinion-former without an opinion ought to be a candidate for the bench, too. But not, I would argue and hope, so long as he continues to have views.

Liabile to fall foul of libel

MATTHEW Engel concludes that the Botham libel action will send out a clear warning to potential litigants...

ernment consider banning all libel cases and revoking the relevant statutes so as to get rid of this nonsense? The legal profession does itself no good by pretending that all civil suits are of equal importance...

YET again we see how out of touch with real life our legal system is, that 13 days of court time could be wasted on a squabble between three middle-aged children...

The double-standard mars the Guardian's coverage. The video evidence which Matthew Engel claims "clearly showed [Botham] manipulating, quite legally, a ball that had gone out of shape" was no more or less conclusive than the video evidence that was used to condemn an entire team...

No smoke without advertising

ALONG with Peter Preston, I was at the advertising industry seminar in Cambridge (Why cigarettes are hard to stub out, August 2). I proposed the ending of advertisers "freedom" to promote tobacco...

RECENT reports of a link between smoking and cot death are not based on a new "theory", as suggested by Jonas Cleary (Letters, July 30) but on the latest research. The Confidential Enquiry into Stillbirths and Deaths in Infancy (CESDI) interviewed the families of 196 cot death babies and 780 controls...

YOUR PENSION: IN YOUR OWN TIME, IN YOUR OWN WAY. A Merchant Investors pension, is an easy, convenient and flexible pension. The charges are low. Invest what you want, when you want. Pay no commission when you buy direct. No sales person will bother you.



Aimed at the wrong target

YOUR proposition that gun owners are responsible for the actions of an evil perpetrator who obtained a Firearms Certificate from an incompetent and negligent firearms licensing department...

Douglas Hurd said that "the public has lost confidence in our firearms licensing system" and then brought in the most evil and pernicious legislation that did absolutely nothing to address that point...

Faith, hope and charity for Blair

CATHERINE Bennett falls to understand a key difference in those messianic role calls for Blair lookalikes certainly went for the jugular. As usual with political pundits commenting on religion, she misses the point...

MORRIS Cerullo, Savanorola. David Korsh Catherine Bennett's role call for Blair lookalikes certainly went for the jugular. As usual with political pundits commenting on religion, she misses the point...

The doves overcome the Hawk

YOU call our recent acquittal on charges of criminal damage to a Hawk fighter, a "perverse decision". Hawk jury adds to "perverse" cases, July 31. This was not a perverse decision, but one based on law...

In praise of the body beautiful

IS IT not time that we learnt that the healthy human body is something natural, beautiful and yet fragile. It seems strange that in Britain it is seen as a democratic right for citizens to retain hand guns but not to practice naturism on wild remote beaches...

Still birth rights

AS A parish priest I have just taken a short service for a couple who have recently experienced a still birth. Their child was under 26 weeks old. Because of the size and the policy of the Worcestershire hospital where the still birth took place...

Visitors barred from Britain

DAME Elizabeth Anson and the Immigration Service are rightly concerned about families being kept apart by the UK's immigration controls. (Visitors wrongly refused visas, July 30). The experience of CAB clients is that people with pressing reasons for visiting the UK — to care for sick relatives, attend funerals — are refused visas without explanation...

Brave new, depressing world

THE depressing aspect of Gordon Brown's answer (in the real world, August 2) to Roy Hattersley's arguments is the turning theme that better financial compensation for the latter's unemployed constituency and other apparent social failures has no place in Labour's brave new world. Cedl Fudge, Barga Cottage, Church Road, Chertsey, Surrey GU10 2GT.

A Country Diary

THE BURREN, IRELAND: Our French visitors and Mary Ann decided to scale the "height" of Mungmore while I kept to the low lands to fulfil my wish of walking round the turlough (disappearing lake) at its foot. We had seen from a distance waterlilies on the turlough — these I wished to see up close. Because of dry weather the water had almost disappeared, leaving but a few pools so I set off with high hopes and a stout stick to test the ground ahead lest I sink! All seemed easy at first but I soon discovered beneath my feet a veritable constellation of wild flowers and plants. My efforts to avoid treading on them resulted in a walk like that of a drunken sailor, made worse by myriads of distasteful butterflies, moths and leaping frogs. What a paradise! — shrubby cinquefoil, late mountain avens, orchids: deep pink pyramidal, O'Kelly's white, fragrant, purple/pink wild thyme patches, yellow Ladies bedstraw, maidenhair fern, gold Aztec-headed curling...

Vertical text on the right edge of the page, including "does!" and "be a" and "but then".



### Why has Yorkshire's chief constable been given such a pasting this week for daring to suggest prostitution should be legal?

# It doesn't need to be a jungle out there



The Joanna Coles interview

ONE evening, shortly after Keith Hellawell started work as an eager young copper in Yorkshire, he arrested a prostitute. The next morning he was startled to hear that the chief constable wanted to see him. "Ah, Hellawell," snorted the chief, over his desk. "Congratulations! I see that last night you arrested a young lady for loitering."

"Actually, sir," said Hellawell brightly, "I arrested her for prostitution."

"Oh, no, you didn't," snapped the chief constable. "You arrested her for loitering. You see Constable Hellawell, we don't have any prostitutes in this town."

You might not think so from the exterior of the redbrick Victorian West Yorkshire Police HQ, but times do change. Thirty five years on and it is Hellawell swinging his legs from the chief constable's chair and this week provoking a cyclone of criticism by suggesting that not only do prostitutes exist but that their activities should actually be legalised.

It's a view he has held for years, together with the idea that we should, at the very least, be exploring the possibilities of legalising some drugs. Not since James Anderson, Greater Manchester's ex-chief, announced that God had spoken to him about Aids, have we had such an outspoken copper. But unlike Anderson, Hellawell speaks serious. He also puts the fear of the Almighty into Michael Howard.

It has, however, cost him. For the usual has started to happen — the Tory tabloid press have decided that he's a raving liberal and embarked on a gentle drip-drip smear campaign. You talk about the stuff, where did it power. "Gucci shoes" (untrue), "monogrammed shirts" (untrue), "drives a black Porsche" (untrue, he drives a Jeep).

"I'm not writing a book. Another of his refrains is, "There are no quick resolutions." No wonder the tabloids can't get enough of him. "Oh, I hate the publicity," he says, echoing the most over-used phrase of the decade, though for once I believe it. "If you write that, a lot of people will say, 'Oh, he says that, he's a right smooth bugger.' But I don't like it. I talk about these issues, prostitution and drugs, as a chief constable, but there are very few benefits as an individual for doing it."

"Number one, you're open to criticism. Why doesn't he keep his mouth shut? ... We don't want to talk about these things."

Number two, "This guy likes publicity," so your personal credibility is tarnished with vanity. Number three, you've got this "Well, if he's prepared to put himself forward, he's fair game. I'm not a politician, but there's a personal toll on doing this on you and your family. I'm doing it because I believe in it. And I know from experience what it's like to be at the bottom of the heap."

resolved attempted murders.) Then there was the recent case of Hellawell's eldest daughter, a police officer in West Yorkshire, who woke up to find an unmarked van outside her front door containing reporters from the Sun and the Daily Mail. When Hellawell rang the editors to find out what was going on, he discovered two stories doing the rounds. One, her (black) ex-husband had been suspended from the force and was now dealing drugs (untrue). Two, her ex-husband was so pestered by the divorce he had, as an act of revenge, sent an obscene message to 50 female police officers on e-mail (untrue).

"All nonsense, nonsense," says Hellawell calmly, sipping black sugarless tea in his comfortable, oddly silent office. "But these are the penalties for speaking out. People describe me as if I live in the fast track of life. I'm a 35-year-serving, 55-year-old grandfather. I jog to keep my weight down, and I like gardening and walking!"

It's not hard to see where some of the exaggeration comes from. For a start, dressed in navy double-breasted suit and yellow floral tie, he seems shockingly stylish for a chief constable. Remoulded to be the model for Anglia TV's *The Chief* (played by Martin Shaw), he resembles a handsome Canadian husky, with slanting eyes that hold your stare. He is also passionate about his specialist subjects, drugs (he's spokesman for the Association of Chief Police Officers), prostitution and technology, talking at surprising length and refusing the temptations of the soundbite.

His most common phrase during our chat was, "I'm not avoiding that question, but let me put it into context." Ten minutes later he answers the original question in such detail and depth I feel embarrassed that I'm not writing a book. Another of his refrains is, "There are no quick resolutions."

"No wonder the tabloids can't get enough of him. "Oh, I hate the publicity," he says, echoing the most over-used phrase of the decade, though for once I believe it. "If you write that, a lot of people will say, 'Oh, he says that, he's a right smooth bugger.' But I don't like it. I talk about these issues, prostitution and drugs, as a chief constable, but there are very few benefits as an individual for doing it."

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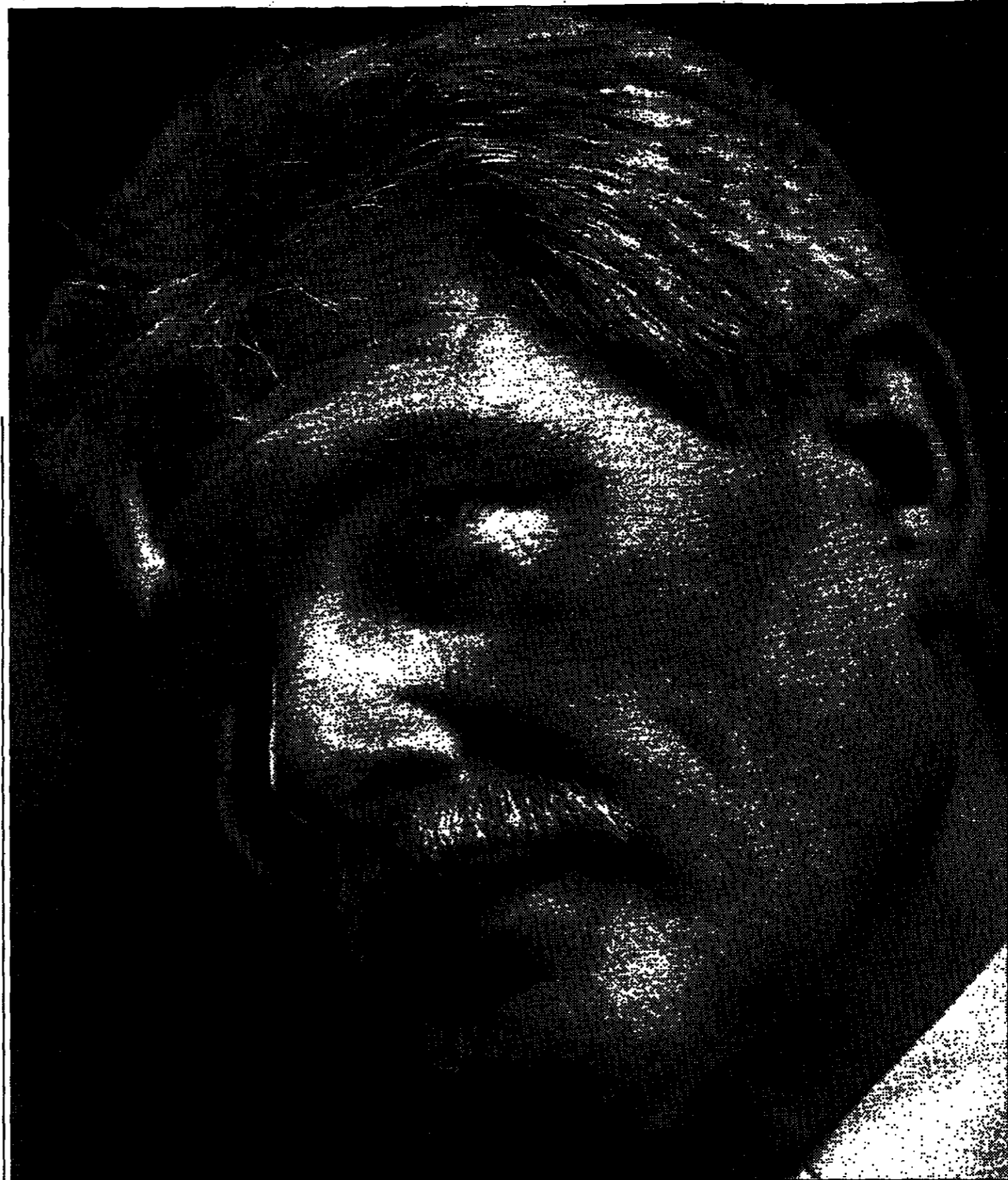
"At the time, I didn't understand why there was this desire to say prostitutes didn't exist when clearly they did." It was an attitude he would come across again. "In the mid-1960s, I recommended we set up a drugs squad. The chief constable said: 'But we don't have a drugs problem here.' It doesn't apply today, the police force is much more sophisticated."

But I wonder if he's frustrated by the fact that no matter how often the arguments for legalising prostitution are aired, our unworkable laws never seem to change? "I didn't set out to heighten the debate for legalisation, those are just my views. It is a very, very difficult issue." The letters I've received show the polarisation of opinion. "They also show the public's ignorance about the depth of the problem."

"I'm not flying a kite here, this is a real problem." The letters I've received show the polarisation of opinion. "They also show the public's ignorance about the depth of the problem."

Formerly chief constable of Cleveland, he witnessed the aftermath of the notorious child abuse case. "Look at our double standards," he snaps. "If a 15-year-old child is abused in the family, we all gather round. If a 15-year-old out there is selling her body with five or six men a day, not using a condom because she's too spaced out, we label her a prostitute or criminal! The current laws aren't working, all these things are going wrong."

But can he really see a British prime minister pledging him or herself to making brothels legal? "There isn't a strong political will to face it, it's a sensitive issue, there's a lot of not-in-my-backyard. During the Ripper inquiry, we found that the partners of men who used prostitutes didn't want to know. They wouldn't believe it, even when they were indirectly involved. We didn't tell them," he adds quickly. "But some of the men we questioned felt they had to. "Prostitution's not high on the community agenda, people aren't starving, they're not at war with someone. It's distasteful. We don't talk about these things, that's why there is no immediate resolution. But every time it's aired, it informs discussion and people do learn more. And it allows local au-



thorities to feel more comfortable with what they're doing." What are they doing? "For example, in Edinburgh and in some of our cities, they turn a blind eye to massage parlours. They know the law is being broken, and they know they are colluding. In some instances they do it hoping no one will find out, keep the lid on it. But when it comes out in the open and they see there isn't a strong negative reaction, it gives them moral support. "If I can call it that, they still have to fudge or bend or ignore the laws but at least they feel the public is saying, 'Look we're not ready to change the law, but we're not going to be a chief constable, especially of the force I joined, where I was born, and the place where I shall die.'"

Does he, I wonder, have to think like a criminal to catch criminals? "No. You have to understand people. I'm proud to be a Yorkshireman and I'm proud to be British. I haven't seen another community I would swap British for and I'm proud of the opportunities that it's given me. As he prepares to go home, a pale press officer suddenly appears with an urgent request: "It's CNN. They want to do an interview with you, to go worldwide. Hellawell shakes his head. "No, I'm going home. I'm due to go jogging with my wife." And with that he is gone. You see, he really does hate publicity.

fact that I am listening to a chief constable saying this... "There's a misconception about the police service," he says briskly. "The traditional idea of it being very right-wing, conservative with a small or even a large C, is not true. There has moved on. "It used to be that chief constables would meet for dinner once a year at the Savoy. That was the only meeting they had about crime in this country! But law and order is a political debate now, we're getting into the social issues of the day." And Hellawell loves this challenge. "I enjoy every part of it. It really is a privilege to be a chief constable, especially of the force I joined, where I was born, and the place where I shall die."

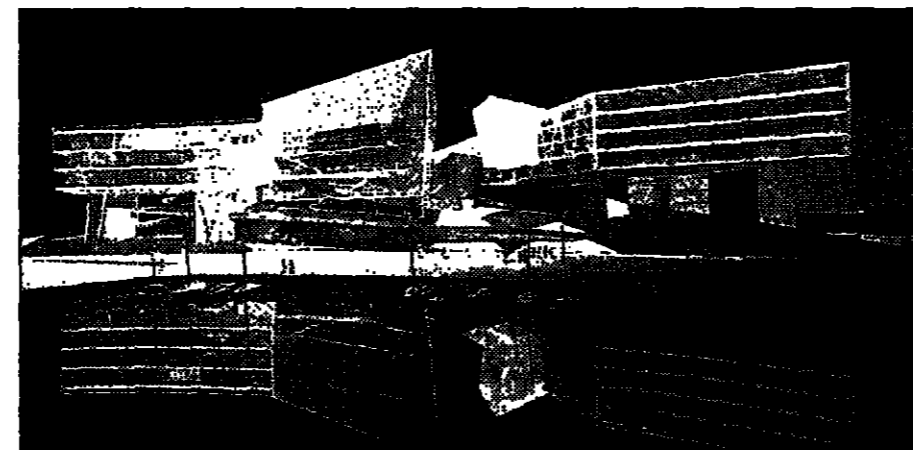
PHOTOGRAPH: DON MCPHIE

## How the Glass Necklace sank in Cardiff Bay

DAN GLAISTER on the shabby treatment meted out to a prestige Millennium building project

ASSIDUOUS readers of the Official Journal of the Millennium Commission would have come across a rather perplexing announcement a few weeks ago. Invitation to tender, it stated, for proposed Millennium Arts Heritage Centre in Cardiff Bay. Architects were invited to submit proposals for a centre comprising a 2,000-seater auditorium, a People And The Sea Museum, an Imax cinema, a retail and commercial space, and a home for Welsh National Opera. Applicants should apply in the first instance to the Wales Millennium Centre.

The announcement is the latest but surely not the last episode in a sorry affair that has exposed the haphazard nature of public building in this country. It is the story of a gifted architect who did not fit in, of the mismanagement of the Millennium celebrations, of the confused role of public consultation, and of the power of the "Taffia".



lentum, the idea for an opera house on the bay took off, a musical theatre that would be an architectural landmark for the Welsh capital. An international architectural competition was announced. The competition was won by Iranian-born Zaha Hadid, with an imaginative design nicknamed the "glass necklace". Immediately there were problems: budget estimates varied from £43 million to £84 million; an exhibition to encourage debate about the project provoked a mixture of apathy and hostility. Hadid became famous in the tabloids for one of her previous achievements, designing a fire station in Germany. And the scheme garnered allegations of elitism. "The impression was of a project drifting without leadership, effectively left to referendum."

Hadid's design became the subject of drawn-out negotiations, normal for a competition but unhelpful in the circumstances. A modified design and financial package met with the approval of the Cardiff Bay Development Corporation, aka the "Taffia", a collection of the great and the good of Cardiff. At the meeting, to which Hadid was not invited, the project was killed. The project to bring a high-profile cultural centre to Cardiff, hyped as doing for Cardiff what the

Touch of glass... Zaha Hadid's updated vision of a Sydney Opera House for Cardiff

more carefully regulated and more likely to resolve public funding. "Architects spend an enormous amount of time on plans that never go anywhere," he says. "You cannot have an answer unless the question is properly set. At an international level, we're going to look ridiculous."

There had been a single indication I would have applied but they've totally ignored us. I find it quite staggering." Fellow architect Richard Rogers shares her anger. "Zaha is one of the most important of the younger architects. We have to treat her with the greatest respect," he says. Rogers places the responsibility for many of the problems on the competition process in this country, pointing to Germany, where competitions are much more common.

num money is missed it puts it back on the ranks of things that need to be done. But he shares the concerns about the stewardship of the project. "The problem is that nobody has been totally honest about the reasons why the last project was turned down. The mixture of activities in the new proposal appears to be precisely the one we recommended after the Millennium Commission turned us down. We took a package to a meeting with the CBCD and others. The meeting was undermined by a letter from the chairman of the CBCD."

Hadid too was surprised that the new proposals to broaden the project and appeal to more than one funding body should bear so strong a resemblance to her rejected proposal. "We've done it before, we know all the answers, and another competition will waste a lot of time and money. If there's a precedent for this kind of behaviour it will happen all the time."

The reality is split out by Michael Manser, former president of the RIBA and adjudicator for the new competition. "Probably an open competition is not a good idea for a building of this stature," he says. "We're looking for an architect, not a building." An architect with a reputation, one suspects, based on something more solid than a fire station in Stuttgart. A botched competition process, scuppered by erratic funding decisions and local business interests, swayed by hostile public reaction... no wonder Rogers is fuming. "What we must ask is, is this an ethical way to behave? She won the competition and was then torn to threads by the public and the press. Architects will have to search their souls. Are we ethically prepared to enter this competition?" The competition closes on Monday. Then the fun begins.

£10 BUYS A CHAIN CUTTER

He's chained up through his sensitive nose and made to walk on red hot plates, whilst the back of his legs are left in time to music. Onlookers taunt him and force him to drink beer. Why? Because they're teaching him to 'dance' for tourists who pay to watch his agonising waltz.

The World Society for the Protection of Animals (WSPA) rescues 'dancing bears' and takes them to sanctuaries where they can be free of pain and suffering. But we can't carry out our life-saving work without the support of people like you. Your gift of just £10, or whatever you can afford, will help cut the chains of innocent animals. So please send your donation today. He's counting on you.

Form with fields for Name, Address, Postcode, and a section for cheque payment details.

Handwritten signature or text at the bottom of the page.

Sci-fi author Ray Bradbury has it all: film credits, literary superstardom — even a crater on the moon named after one of his books. On the eve of the publication of his new short stories, he talks to TOM HUTCHINSON

# My life among the stars

WHEN American preachers choke on the Old Testament, they clear their throats by quoting Ray Bradbury. Their exodus from Moses directs them into the promised lands of the veteran science fiction writer.

Bradbury discovered that some Bible-belters were getting uplift from him when they wrote to thank him. "I was so flattered, I had letters saying that some of them were reading my more optimistic fiction from the pulpit. And the congregations were going for it!"

So what did he do? What any American go-getter would do. Like one of the pioneering people about whom he wrote so persuasively in *The Martian Chronicles* and *The Golden Apples of the Sun*, he kept on the handwagon of the main chance.

To coincide with the September publication of *Quicker Than The Eye*, a book of new and original short stories published in September in the States, he's also written a Chap-Book For Burnt-Out Rabbits, Priests And Ministers. "That's specially for those who would like an alternative. I may not believe in their personal religions, but I have tremendous faith in the Cosmos, in the Life Force for good."

A forgivable belief in himself, too. As the premiere of the spectacular science-fiction movie *Independence Day* looms over us like a vast mother-ship, Bradbury has taken out an advertisement in *Daily Variety* urging that *The Martian Chronicles* be similarly filmed. "The ad cost me 4,000 bucks, but I wanted producers to know it was still available. There was a lengthy TV series, based on the book, which was a bore. It is a book that needs all the new tricks that have been developed."

Raymond Douglas Bradbury is 76 next month, but he's still a mighty player on America's literary and media scene, proclaiming that *Independence Day* proves something he has always said,

something film-makers were too stupid to understand: that fantasy always makes money at the box-office. "There was a cinema just round the block which showed *Dracula* and *Frankenstein* movies non-stop. It's still running. It's not just because it's all a great escape. It's because it's great fun."

"You know, *Independence*, with its threat of alien invasion, is a throwback to the paranoid SF film of the fifties. *The Day The World Spooked Still* or my own *It Came From Outer Space*. With this new film the aliens mean us harm. To that extent it's anti-ET or *Close Encounters Of The Third Kind*, with creatures that meant us good. Once again we're under threat."

Christopher Isherwood called Bradbury a poet; chubby and bespectacled, he is still a man with a head full of singing birds, though now they've been orchestrated to sing to a pitch that makes him

one of the richest writers around. For me, he is not so much a visionary as a way of life, since we became friends many years ago when I did a book of horror stories, *Dark Carnival*, was published. They are the best written this century and deserve re-printing.

Since then he has become a literary superstar. He was an ideas man for Disneyland and Disney's *Epcot* — "Walt Disney said, 'I'm a genius and you're a genius, we won't get on.' But we did." He's even been an architectural adviser. The Apollo 15 astronauts named a moon-indentation *Dandelion Crater* after his book *Dandelion Wine*.



Dressed to thrill... Bradbury in the halcyon days of sci-fi and (above left) his *Beast From 20,000 Fathoms* MICHAEL CHILDERS

His creativity still revs at top speed. The man who earned his first money in literature at the age of 15, by writing gags for comedian George Burns, has just written a treatise for *The Shaw Society* with a title as unwieldy as his ideas are simple — GBS: *Refurbishing The Tin Woodman; Science Fiction With A Heart, A Brain And The Nerve*. It's the Shavian idea of a life-force to which he corresponds.

He speaks with brimming enthusiasm: "I know it sounds painfully corny, but every minute of being alive is an adventure, a festival of discovery." Part of that ongoing euphoria is in being married to Maggie, who has borne him four daughters, so that he now has seven grandchildren and a rivalry with one daughter, who has collected an Emmy (for producing and writing a famous TV soap opera) to contend with his. But, for a writer, he has had

### When scripting Moby Dick, John Huston sent two boxers round to beat him up because of a disagreement

a life rich in physical incident outside his imagination. One of the most horrendous was scripting *Moby Dick* for a John Huston who, while they were in Ireland, sent round two boxers to beat him up because of a disagreement. Bradbury escaped the boxers, but not the trauma of the event.

Years later he went up to the great man in a restaurant. "I was sure to know I forgave you," he said. "You changed my life." Maggie said: "But you hate him so. Why did you do that?" Bradbury responded: "But he did change my life — for the better. After *Moby Dick* I could take my talent anywhere." He wrote a

novel about Huston, though to fully exercise the experience from his system.

He has always seen Hollywood as, literally, a Planet Hollywood: a place where human beings become alien in their dealings with each other. When he was asked to script *The Beast From 20,000 Fathoms* he realised it had been plagiarised from his own story, *The Foghorn*. Shamefacedly, the producer paid up for the rights.

"It's not that people in Hollywood are naturally dishonest; it's just that some of them feel that they have to be." Ray Bradbury bears them no grudges, but he wishes that movies had happier endings. "What I mean is that villains should get their comeuppance. Burt Lancaster in *The Sweet Smell of Success* played an evil man; at the end he should have been thrown from a skyscraper. Instead he survived.

"Films are for solving life. Not for making it more difficult."

He can be difficult himself, though. "I was at a party where people were making fun of the human race reaching the moon. And I took their telephone numbers. When a man actually landed on the moon, I rang them up in the middle of the night and said, 'You see, it happened you stupid jerk.'"

He plans mightily ahead. He wants to write another treatise, on the way Herman Melville's *Moby Dick* resembles Jules Verne's *Twenty Thousand Leagues Under The Sea*: "Captain Ahab is the reverse of Captain Nemo. And I can prove it in so many ways."

He left me to go by Eurotunnel to Paris, where he is to holiday with his beloved Maggie in his beloved France. A man who has seen his dreams become reality around him. A renaissance man for all futuristic seasons.

Later I got a note thanking me for being his guest at luncheon. He had paid for the lunch. They don't make men with manners like that these days. Unless, of course, they come from other planets.

## Does Peter Middleton's report mean British film has a bright future, asks SIMON HATTENSTONE

### On the Right track

SIR PETER Middleton stares out of his window on to a Thames-side view of the finest that London can offer. "It's just like a film," he says.

Sir Peter is rather interested in film sets at the moment. Yesterday, his report on the future of British film was published. The chair of the banking group BZW and former Permanent Secretary to the Treasury, he chaired the Advisory Committee on Film Finance, which, after six months, has produced a template for a born-again British film industry.

Industry. That's what Sir Peter wants. An industry to replace that of coal or steel, or cars. An industry Britain can be proud of, one that will boost the economy and our culture.

What is he proposing? Is he about to map out the Hollywood of Europe that fellow knight David Puttnam likes to talk about? Yes and no, he says. It's daft to pretend we can blockbuster our way to *Independence Day* — but, you know, there's a lot to recommend that. It has never been allowed to develop on the scale needed. And without sufficient scale, you're never going to attract investors. In Britain, we're asked to invest in a single film, but it simply doesn't make economic sense. The risk has to be spread over a number of projects to make it worthwhile. BZW would invest in a studio. People complain that Hollywood is run by accountants, but we could do with a bit of that."

Sir Peter's proposal is radical. His committee has decided on one giant, national studio — although initially we may have to settle for three mini-studios until the project matures, by means of a Davy Crockett work-out, into one enterprise.

He elaborates: it won't be a physical studio where people go to make their films, but an organisation film-makers approach to ask whether they can please have some money to make their movie.

And it will distribute films, too. This is an area where home-grown movies have consistently been betrayed. Take



Middleton... his report to the Department of Heritage proposes a single national studio for the British films

Ken Loach's *Land and Freedom*, for instance. Lauded worldwide, there were only 17 prints available in Britain (compared with 120 in France), which meant that despite playing to capacity audiences on tours through the region, many people never got the chance to see it.

Perfectly logical so far. And who will run the studio? Shouldn't pecking and promoting the best of British be left to the state rather than the conflicting interests of movie moguls and big business? Sir Peter's shoulder-blades twitch.

With infinite calm, he explains how the last thing we need is a nationalised film industry. Yes, in the short term, government support is needed. Film-makers should be allowed a 100 per cent write-off of production costs in the year they are incurred. And yes, the lottery would have to stump up £100 million over five years along-side £200 million from the private sector to realise the studio. But, in the long term, the last thing the City would go for is a British film logo. It must be market-led. The studio will be put out to tender.

How will he address that other perennial problem, the refusal of multiplexes to show local films? Has he considered the French practice of bunging the exhibitors a few francs to ensure at least one domestic movie? Yes, he says, but that can never work in an English language speaking country

## Holmes on the warpath

### Television

Nancy Banks-Smith

WAR WALKS (BBC 2), like a good general, does wonders, with very limited resources. The field and farms of Waterloo... one cannon ball... one musket... and one historian, Richard Holmes, terrifies in manner and moustache.

Waterloo literally was a foreign field, a few acres of farmland, fertile with blood and bone. It is very quiet now. The countryside is featureless and flat. The sky is vast and vacant. It was watching a programme about Alexander the Great the other day and heard myself saying urgently, "Air cover! You must have air cover!"

Holmes knocked on the door of La Haye Sainte, which was an abattoir on June 18 1815. It is still a working farm. The farmer keeps the shot he finds in a pewter pot and is not much troubled by tourists. "There's nothing to see... But there is nothing to hear... sometimes... on quiet summer nights?"

The 27th Regiment (Linchings) fought until they fell, still in their square. A small granite headstone records their noble record of stubborn endurance and Wellington's bleak comment: "They saved the centre of my line."

You can tell that this was not a man to waste breath on adjectives. Asked if it was true that he shouted, "Up guards and at 'em!", he denied it. "I probably said, 'Stand up, guards. Make

ready. Fire!" I seem to hear the reporter of the Waterloo Bugle groan. That is not the same thing at all.

The temperamental difference between Napoleon and Wellington is something you can taste. Apart from the obvious clues, guess which one flung open his jacket, showing his bemuddled breast, crying "Soldiers, would you shoot your Emperor?" and which one wrote "PS. I forgot to tell you I was made a duke."

As Sellar and Yeatman said, Napoleon wore his hat like this and Wellington wore his

Watching a programme about Alexander the Great I heard myself saying 'Air cover! You must have air cover!'

hat like that. You just knew they weren't going to get on. However, I did notice that Wellington had a life-sized, naked, marble statue of Napoleon in his London house. Odd, really.

Waterloo was the last, great, bare-knuckle fight. They seem now like another breed of men. When Lord Paget said "Good God, my leg's been struck off!" Wellington replied "Good God, man, so it has." When Marshal Bliicher was ridden over by three French cavalry charges, he got up and headed for the sound of gunfire. He was 78. Endurance

## All at sea

### Radio

Lyn Gardner

WE ARE on our heels. So is Radio 4. We are by the seaside. Radio 4 has plunged into the Deep. A bit too deep, I'd say, when you are happily splashing about in the shallows you don't want to be told that you are probably up to your knees in seven types of eddies.

This six-week season of dramas and documentaries about the oceans has been pretty doomy so far: global warming, political squabbles, environmental pollution. The sea has got the lot.

Even the common periwinkle is having a rough time. In the first *Tidal Talk*, Bill Wallis played the small-like resident of the shoreline as an end-of-the-pier showman in a dinky resort. "Have you heard the one about the crab prosecuted for possession of hard prawn?"

*Tidal Talk*, written by Lynne Truss, is produced by the Natural History Unit. Despite the haul of heavy-weight thespians — Alison Steadman as an Okay Yaki sea anemone and Judi Dench as the deceptive limpet are yet to come — you get more information than drama. More fairy jokes than anything else.

I didn't know that the periwinkle's teeth grow continuously or that sometimes they are eaten by seagulls and evacuated still alive. "My enemy's enemy is my friend," chuckled Perry cheerfully. There's still five weeks of laughs like this to come.

Mike Golding has sailed round the world the wrong way. Shocking news to those like myself who were blissfully ignorant that there is a right way. In the first part of

20,000 Leagues Under The Sea, Golding used his own yachting experience and interviews with experts to chart the circulation of the oceans. Apparently it's much like the fountain in my Mum and Dad's garden, the water just goes round and round.

But there are worrying developments. The sea level is increasing in some oceanic declining in others. The bottom can't fathom it. Since it takes seven years to observe the oceans with the same amount of detail with which meteorologists observe the atmosphere every day, it will take years for them to find out why.

They could just chuck a bottle in the sea. Everyone is doing it, according to Message In A Bottle, a programme that implied that if you wanted to find a mate, emigrate or get a penpal, a message in a bottle will do the trick. It's certainly cheaper than joining *Dateline*. Evidently Radio 4 doesn't consider throwing bottles in the sea as a form of marine pollution. It must take its lead from Guinness Export, the mid-fifties dropped 150,000 bottles with messages into the ocean as an advertising stunt.

One or two still turn up every year, complete with instructions on how to turn them into tasteful table lamps.

For another kind of ocean trash, you only had to listen to the first episode of *Deep Station Emerald*, a futuristic thriller that takes place on a research station 9,000 metres down on the Atlantic ocean floor. It is supposed to be set in 2012 and sounds as if it were made in the mid-sixties. Deliberate. I think. The cartoon quality is effective, and with four phials of genetic nerve agent gone missing, one member of the crew drifted to a pulp and another about to snuff it, the body count is clearly going to be satisfyingly high.

At the Gate, London W11, until August 17 (0171-229 0708).

## The Decameron sits heavy on the stomach. But it is nourishing nevertheless. LYN GARDNER reports

### Plucky peasant's play

NICK Ward's beautiful version of *The Decameron* strips the meaning of life right back to the bare essentials: a little wine and food, company and sex and storytelling.

But it is far from being cosy. Conor Murphy's strikingly effective, if perilous, set of planks of wood laid like railway sleepers across a pit en-

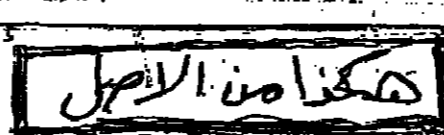
lives that the refugees from the pestilence weave their stories of love and lechery over an open grave. If love doesn't get you, the plague certainly will. Hell waits with its jaws wide open.

Even food is suspect. An unlucky lover, ashamed of his poverty, serves his beloved his one treasure — his falcon — only to discover that it is the

live bird she desires to save her dying son; a Provence knight has his wife's lover's heart stewed and served to her on a platter. The earthy smell of cooking lingers on the auditorium air like a cruel reproach. This is peasant theatre: like peasant food it is simple, rough and nourishing. The stories weave seamlessly, one into another. Some,

Storm

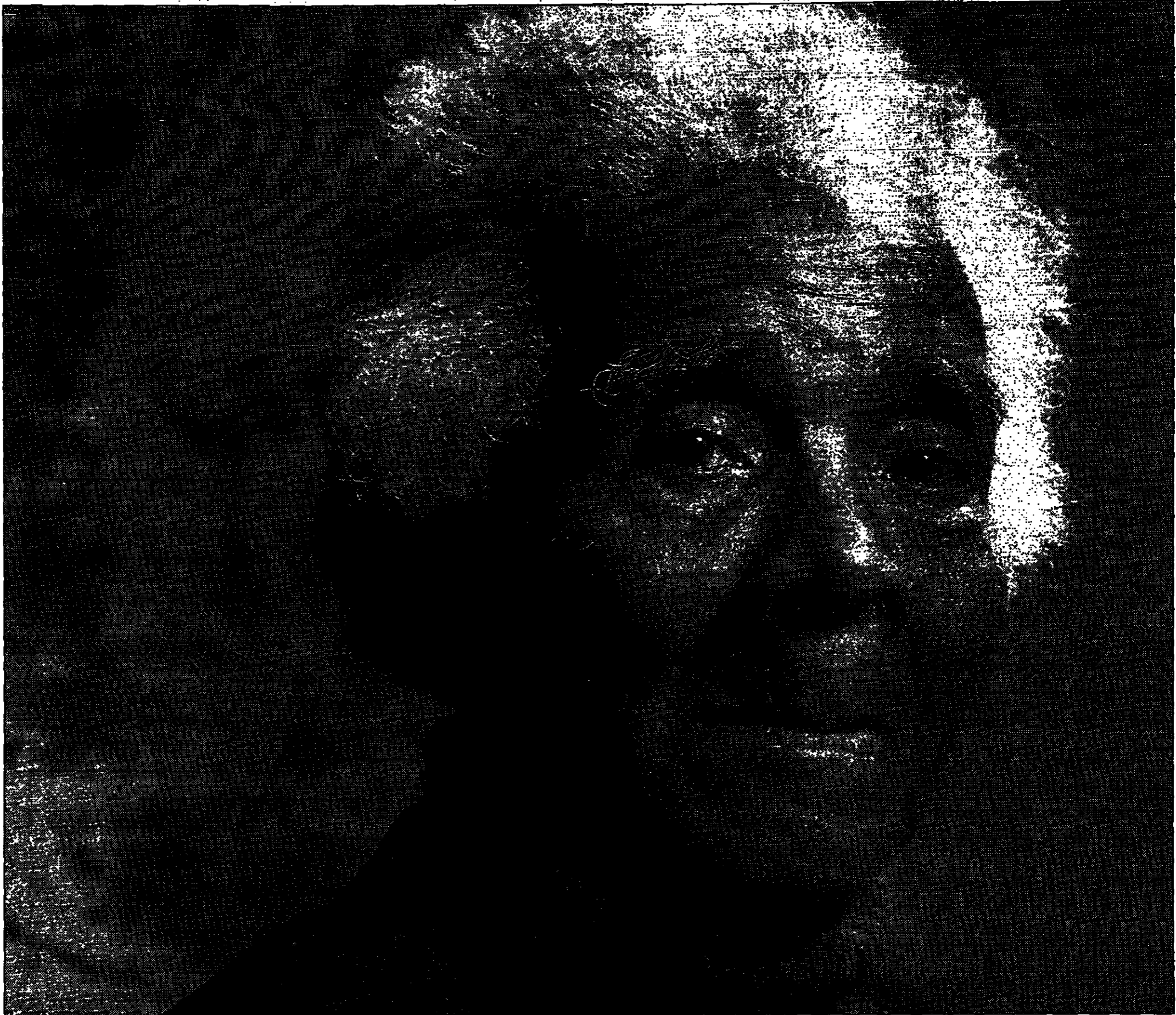
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C L R James - Marxist, Guardian cricket writer and thinker who fired black liberation - was a sage decades ahead of his time. With Trevor McDonald about to bring his classic Beyond a Boundary to radio, MARGARET BUSBY looks forward to his rediscovery by a new generation

Portrait by SNOWDON

Wilderness man... James's works have been scandalously neglected. Below with Margaret Busby in Brixton shortly before his death



# Storming the pavilion of prejudice

TWENTY years ago, the books of C L R James - Trinidad-born historian, critic, philosopher, sports, political commentator, novelist, playwright - were virtually unobtainable in Britain. Since his death in Brixton in 1982 at the age of 88, scarcely a year has passed without at least one addition to the catalogue of James studies. Conferences, institutions and scholars vie to interpret his oeuvre. Only last week the New Yorker devoted five pages to the man they headed the Romantic Revolutionary, hailing the emergence from "obscurity" of one of the century's most original minds. "James was always the avant-garde's avant-garde, unknown to the many, adulated by the few," it began, betraying a trace of peevishness that his work is no longer the domain of the "noble handful" who read him in his days of pamphlet obscurity - reminiscent of the food snob who suddenly finds a favourite haunt written up by the Good Food Guide. Though I lay no claim membership of that select club, the name of Cyril Lionel Robert James - contracted to C.L.R. or Nello - is one that I have known since childhood. He and my father were at school together in Trinidad, both leaving Queen's Royal College in 1918. C.L.R. would go to England in 1922, to the USA in 1928, back to Trinidad in 1938, followed by stints on both sides of the Atlantic, before settling in London for the last decade of his life. My father, after studying medicine in Dublin and practising as a GP in Walthamstow, emigrated to Ghana in 1925. Yet they remained life-long friends, saw each other whenever they could, in which ever country they could meet. Once when my father was in New York and C.L.R. in Washington, my father sent him a plane ticket so that he could join him. Thus it was as a family friend that I was first aware of C.L.R. his visiting fedora balanced on a hat-stand as lanky as himself, rising to the peculiarly Trinidadian humour known as "fatigue" that my father indulged in to tease his old friend for "joining the Bloomsbury set". The copy I now own of Aimé Césaire's *Cahier d'un retour au pays natal*, is the more precious for its inscription from C.L.R. to my father. Mention of James in our family was no more unusual than a visit to our "bush" home by his remarkable compatriot,

George Padmore, right-hand man of Ghana's first president Kwame Nkrumah. But years later, as a publisher, the neglect of much key James material rankled with me. Even his masterpiece *The Black Jacobins* was out of print. The only two titles that might be found (with much hunting) in London bookshops were his now classic cricket memoir, *Beyond a Boundary*, and his novel *Minty Alley*, reprinted by Trinidadian John La Rose's New Beacon Books. So in the mid-1970s I undertook the compilation of an extensive James bibliography, which ran to some 50 books and pamphlets, and hundreds of shorter writings. Allison & Busby set about a publishing programme, beginning with his *Selected Writings*, and in the course of the next decade produced nine James volumes. They were well reviewed in the national press, C.L.R. appeared on television, was even photographed with his trademark hat by Snowdon. The revival would surely have continued had not the fickle fortunes of the book trade had other plans for the company. But it was gratifying to see the beginnings of a resurgence of interest in a man whose ideas were so ahead of his time that the wider currency they deserve was so delayed. Among the Jamesians now proliferating - such as his monumental *American Civilization*, published 45 years after its conception, and *Spain's Delivery*, a collection of letters written to Constance Webb, the young American who was to become his wife and bear him a son - one work will forever be missing: his autobiography. It was a project often mooted but never brought to fruition (in a letter of condolence on my father's death in 1980, C.L.R. wrote: "I have only one tiny mite of recompense for all that George has been to me. I shall be able to express it in my autobiography." In its absence, *Beyond a Boundary*, is the text that must substitute, outlining his life until the time of its publication in 1963, synthesised with a re-examination of assumptions about society and the role of culture. James professes it with a caveat: "This book is neither cricket reminiscences nor autobiography. It poses the question, 'What do they know of cricket who only cricket know?'" It shows how the cricket ethic has shaped social life in the West Indies, ex-

plains why James saw no division between his love of sport and his struggle for a just society. Born in Trinidad in 1901, C.L.R. James spent half of each year with his grandmother and two puritanical aunts in the small town of Tunapuna, in a house by the cricket ground. It was "superbly situated, exactly behind the wicket. . . By standing on a chair a small boy of six could watch practice every afternoon and matches on Saturday. . . From the chair he could also mount on to the window-sill and so stretch a groping hand for the books on the top of the wardrobe. Thus early the pattern of my life was set." Cricket and literature. His father was a teacher, his



As a philosopher, James (above in old age) embraced Picasso, WG Grace, Shakespeare, the calypsonian Mighty Sparrow and the Greek Olympians with equal ease

mother an avid reader, and as she put books down, young James picked them up. He developed an obsession with Thackeray's *Vanity Fair*, reading it on an average once every three months. At the same time, scouring the articles in *The Bits* and other magazines carried by the itinerant bookseller, he zealously amassed statistics and clippings about cricket and cricketers. "A British intellectual before I was 10, an alien in my own environment. . . My life up to 10 laid the powder for a war that lasted without respite for eight years, and intermittently afterwards - a war between English puritanism, English literature and cricket, and the realism of West Indian life." The Trinidad government offered yearly four free exhibi-

tions to the two secondary schools, the government Queen's Royal College and the Catholic college, St Mary's. Through this narrow gate boys, poor but bright, could get a Cambridge Senior Certificate, a passport to a good job. There were even more glittering prizes: three island scholarships worth \$200 each. With one of these a boy could study law or medicine abroad and return with a profession commanding prestige. There were few other roads to independence for a black man. The final achievement was nomination to the Legislative Council. "Exhibition, scholarship, profession, wealth, Legislative Council and the title of Honourable. That was the course marked out for me." (It was also the course my father

whole world around him, and his determination to stick to his own ideas, nothing could have saved me from winning a scholarship, becoming an Honourable Member of the Legislative Council and ruining my whole life." Distracted from academia by his passion for sports (in addition to being a useful cricketer, he held the Trinidad high-jump record for a while) and his relentless pursuit of his extra-curricular reading, James acknowledged that on leaving school in 1918 there was no world for which he was fitted, least of all the one he was to enter. For a time he taught at his old school, while honing his fiction-writing skills, never losing sight of his plan to go abroad. But increasingly he studied the local political situation, and began to prepare a biography of Captain Cipriani, a local white man who had built a mass labour movement. James's opportunity to travel came in 1922, with the encouragement of the great cricketer Learie Constantine, who had gone to England to play for Lancashire and asked James for help with his book, *Cricket and I*. So, carrying manuscripts for both projects, James boarded the boat for Plymouth. "The British intellectual was going to Britain," James told Constantine's suggestion to join him in Lancashire. "Within five months we were supplementing each other in a partnership that had West Indian self-government as its goal." They were both soon in demand as speakers on cricket and the West Indies. With Learie's help C.L.R. published *The Life of Captain Cipriani*; Leonard and Virginia Woolf's Hogarth Press brought out an abridged version as *The Case for West Indian Self-Government*. James began research for a biography of Toussaint L'Ouverture, leader of the historic 1791 revolt of slaves in San Domingo. (James's play *The Black Jacobins* was produced in London in 1936, featuring Paul Robeson.) "I had no money and there hung over me that shadow of what I was to do to earn some. Cricket came to my rescue."

After watching the sexagenarian Sidney Barnes play in a league match in Nelson, James was moved to write an article, which at Learie's instigation sent to Neville Cardus, cricket correspondent for the Manchester Guardian. Cardus was impressed and took him on. James's only novel *Minty Alley* - the first West Indian novel published in Britain - was produced by Secker & Warburg in 1936. But fiction-writing drained out of him, to be replaced by politics, as he began serious study of Marx, Engels, Lenin and Trotsky. Involving himself in British radical politics, he became a leading Trotskyist, a member first of the Independent Labour Party and then of the Revolutionary Socialist League. His history of the Third International, *World Revolution*, was published in 1937, again by Fredric Warburg, who in *An Occupation for Gentlemen* gives this telling description:

JAMES'S memory was extraordinary. He could quote, not only passages from the Marxist classics but long extracts from Shakespeare, in a soft lilting English which was a delight to hear. Immensely amiable, he loved the despatches of capitalism, fine cooking, fine clothes and beautiful women, without a trace of the guilty remorse to be expected from a seasoned warrior of the class war. Night after night he would address meetings in London and the provinces, denouncing the crimes of the blood-thirsty Stalin, until he was hoarse. . . If politics was his religion and Marx his god, if literature was his passion and Shakespeare his prince among writers, cricket was his beloved activity. . . Sometimes he came for the weekend to our cottage in Sussex and turned out for the local team. He was a demon bowler, and a powerful if erratic batsman. The village loved him, referring to him affectionately as 'the black bastard'. In Sussex politics were forgotten. . . Had he not been a revolutionary thinker, what a wonderful capitalist he would have made!"

James's concern with the struggle for freedom of Africans, fuelled by the Abyssinian crisis of 1936, led to close collaboration with the International African Service Bureau, whose members included Jomo Kenyatta. Its

founder was George Padmore, whom James had known since childhood and was later to introduce to Nkrumah (writing in a letter to Padmore in 1948: ". . . this young man [Nkrumah] is coming to you. . . do what you can for him because he is determined to throw the Europeans out of Africa"). In 1938 a lecture tour took James to the USA. There he remained for 15 years. Pioneering the idea of an autonomous black movement that would not be subordinate to the socialist union movements, he had discussions with Trotsky on the issue. He also founded a democratic revolutionary socialist tendency that gradually elaborated an independent Marxism, breaking with its Trotskyist background. In 1953 James was interned on Ellis Island, as an undesirable alien, during which time he wrote a critical study of Herman Melville, *Mariners, Renegades and Castaways*. The next year he was deported to England.

Before the second world war he had been among the few who not only foresaw but worked for the independence of Africa, and as the results of the struggle for colonial emancipation began to show, he strengthened his links with the Pan-Africanist movement, and with Nkrumah (who recalled in his autobiography that it was through James that he learned "how an under-ground movement worked"). *Nkrumah and the Ghana Revolution* (1977) chronicles the events that led up to and ensued from Ghana becoming the first African country to win independence in 1947. Returning to Trinidad in 1958, he became Secretary of the Federal Labour Party, governing party of the embryonic West Indies Federation, and worked with Dr Eric Williams (his one-time pupil) in the People's National Movement, editing its paper, the Nation, and waging vigorous campaigns including one to have a black man appointed

Margaret Busby was co-founder of Allison & Busby. She is the editor of *Daughters of Africa: An International Anthology of Words and Writing by Women of African Descent*, and is working on a book on the migrations of her own family. Her abridgement of James's *Beyond a Boundary*, read by Trevor McDonald, will be on Radio 4 from August 26. James titles in print: *American Civilization* (Blackwell); *Beyond a Boundary* (Serpent's Tail); *The Black Jacobins*; *Toussaint L'Ouverture* and the *San Domingo Revolution* (Allison & Busby, 1980); *The C L R James Reader* (Blackwell); *Special Delivery: The Letters of C L R James to Constance Webb* (Blackwell).

captain of the West Indies. His association with Williams ended in political disagreement as James returned to England in 1962, a few days before independence. In 1966 he was presented with Trinidad and Tobago's highest award, the Trinity Cross. Perhaps the key to the cyclical nature of James's appeal is that new generations can learn from his insights, as have many of the great history-makers of the century with whom he had been associated, a roll-call that includes Trotsky, Garvey, Nkrumah, Kanyatta, Césaire, Martin Luther King and Walter Rodney. He was above all a teacher: a teacher who learned, and a learner who taught - a combination that made for his distinctive philosophical attitude toward the world, a unique synthesis of theory and practice, that embraced with equal ease Picasso and W G Grace, Shakespeare and the calypsonian Mighty Sparrow, the Greek Olympians and Hegel, Tom Morrison and Michelangelo. Integral to his conception of the world was the idea that ordinary people can shape their own lives, create their own destinies.

C.L.R. James once wrote about the cricketer Garfield Sobers: "All geniuses are merely men who carry to an extreme definitive characteristics of the unit of civilisation to which they belong and the special act or function which they express or practise. Therefore to misunderstand Sobers is to misunderstand the West Indies." As his fellow Trinidadian writer Earl Lovelace wrote at the time of C.L.R.'s death: "He drew from every age and community heroes whose activities and achievements he employed to bury a lie or expose a truth that would liberate people from the ignorance, bigotry and short-sightedness which they brought to bear on their own as much as on other peoples' cultures."

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Michel Debré

All for France

MICHEL DEBRÉ, who has died aged 84, will not be forgotten in the history of modern France. It was he who, in 1945, created the Ecole Nationale d'Administration, thus providing France with its governing class. As Minister for Justice in 1953, he was entrusted by De Gaulle with the task of devising a new constitution, one that is still in existence. From January 8, 1959 until April 14, 1962 he was the first prime minister of the Fifth Republic. "You have made the constitution; it's for you now to make it work" was how the General put it, and Debré set out to do this with an exuberant determination, tinged perhaps with a certain apprehension. A man of great energy, he despised those who did not have a taste for hard work (he explained the failure of statesman such as Georges Bidault by his reluctance to be active). Equipped with a clear and analytical mind, he approached problems in terms of administration and structure. His ideas were almost always realised. But he could be violent. And for most of his active life he was passionately attached to the cause of General de Gaulle. Even here he was anxious to demonstrate that his loyalty did not mean that he was "homme de Général". He wrote to De Gaulle frequently on political matters ("what is

Debré complaining about now?" the General would sigh, as yet another note dropped on his desk); he did not hesitate to tell the General when he thought he was wrong. In 1968 for example, he complained if he thought he was not being adequately consulted; and after De Gaulle's resignation he did not choose to follow him into a melancholy retirement but was Minister for Defence from 1969 to 1973. Debré's grandparents came from Alsace and Lorraine, and both families had rabbinical origins. His father, Professor Robert Debré, was France's leading paediatrician and known throughout the world. Relations between father and son were always close, never more so than in 1943, when they were both separately on the run from the Gestapo and they passed each other on the Boulevard Saint Michel, neither giving any visible signs of recognition. Educated as a lawyer, and a member of the Conseil d'Etat, Debré was soon attracted to politics and when he contributed to a paper on the kind of France young people wanted he met Paul Reynaud. When Reynaud became Minister for Finance, Debré joined his private office and wrote some of the decree laws that marked the work of the pre-war government. At the outbreak of war he joined the army, was captured



"Burned out, worn out, but still burning" Debré inspects a guard of honour on a visit to London in 1972. PHOTOGRAPH BY PETER JONES

and then escaped. After spending some time in Morocco he returned to Paris and worked with the group Ceux De La Résistance, where he planned the future of post-war France. With the Liberation he was appointed Commissaire de la République for the region of Angers and it was there that he met General De Gaulle for the first time. "Bonjour Monsieur Jacques," was the General's greeting, using his Resistance

name. He was recalled to Paris in 1945 with the special task of reforming the civil service, and it was then that he created the Ecole Nationale d'Administration and appointed one of his companions from the Resistance, Bourdillon de Fontenay, as its first director. When De Gaulle resigned in January 1946, Debré was one of the first to plead with him to return to the political arena with his own party. When the

Rally of the French People was formed, Debré worked out its constitutional programme which he called organising revolution by law. As senator for the Indre-et-Loire département he became one of the most resolute of the party's supporters, and when their electoral prospects waned his attitude lost none of its vehemence. He was a strong opponent of the founding of the European

Defence Community in 1963, claiming it was one of the two betrayals of France that he had known, the other being the treason of collaboration after the defeat of 1940. Naturally, he supported the cause of keeping Algeria French but when the crisis of May 1958 blew up he was ill with sciatica and unable to play an important role in the movement that brought De Gaulle back to power. As prime minister he inaugu-

rated a series of economic and social reforms, the most famous of which concerned the new plans for the economy and an agreement on state subsidies for independent (usually Catholic) schools. But the biggest problem was that of Algeria. The process by which De Gaulle proceeded from investing in the future of French Algeria to organising its independence was one that Debré

followed with reluctance. More than once he considered resigning (his father always advised him to stay). However he was always careful to say that Algeria was only one of the difficulties that existed between him and the General. He acted rigorously against both the settlers and the generals when they attempted to revolt against Paris. What counted for him was a unified Gaullist France. It was this vision that he was fading during the 1970s. He therefore stood as a Gaullist candidate in the presidential elections of 1981. But he learned one of the lessons of the Fifth Republic. Every success is attributed to the president; every failure to his prime minister. Hence Debré won a derisory 1.65 per cent of the vote on the first ballot. And so he too faded. But he once described himself, in the words of Berlioz, as "burned out and worn out, but still burning". And so it was through a long and distressing illness. He wrote several books including three volumes of memoirs and his collected conversations with French statesmen. He is survived by four sons, one of whom, Jean-Louis, is the current Minister of the Interior.

**Douglas Johnson**  
Michel Jean-Pierre Debré, born January 15, 1912; died August 2, 1998

Mohammed Farah Aided

The wily warlord

THE career of the Somali warlord Mohammed Farah Aided, who has died aged 69, apparently of a heart attack, after being badly wounded in militia fighting, was nurtured in the 1950s Italy. It germinated as the superpowers played poker in the Horn of Africa in the latter days of the Cold War — with guns as chips — and flourished as his country was torn apart by those weapons in the 1980s. His times came with the downfall of the Somali dictator Mohammed Siad Barre in January 1991. Aided was the most famous of the warlords who have struggled for supremacy in that country's six-year civil war. And his legacy haunts United States foreign policy to this day. The Gulf War may have been a brief triumph. Mogadishu was a lasting disaster. Aided attended an Italian military academy in the mid-1950s, police training in Rome followed, and by 1958 he was back in Somalia as Mogadishu's chief of police. In 1960 the country won its independence. In 1963 Aided took a three year course at the Soviet War Strategic Academy. In 1969 Somalia began its long slide into chaos. The Somali Republic was rent by

fragmentation and tribalism which climaxed with the seizure of power by Siad Barre. It was a time when the rhetoric of Soviet-style modernisation was still in vogue. Thus the country swung towards the Soviet sphere of influence, thus did the country become the Somali Democratic Republic, and thus did Siad Barre's mechanism of control become the Somali Revolutionary Socialist Party. And thus did Aided briefly become the dictator's intelligence boss, but it was an uneasy relationship. With the Somali invasion of Ethiopia in 1977 the Soviet link snapped — Moscow had aimed its money, influence and weapons towards Ethiopia — and by 1980, Siad Barre had signed a defence agreement with the United States. During that period Aided was in a Somali jail but in 1984 Siad Barre released him and soon he embarked on a diplomatic career, as ambassador to Turkey and India. In 1989 Siad Barre recalled him from New Delhi but Aided chose Italian exile, where he and other dissidents from his Hawiye clan formed the United Somali Congress; Aided was the chairman. By then military catastrophe, the end of the Cold War, a

refugee crisis and famine were rocking Siad Barre's regime. Coming out of Ethiopia, the USC fought its way (with the help of the northern guerrilla opposition) to Mogadishu and eventually Siad Barre was chased out of the capital in 1991. But troops loyal to the dictator fought on, and power struggles between other factions, and within the USC and the Hawiye clan — between Aided and his arch rival Ali Mahdi — erupted. Somalia, rich with Cold War guns, turned into a wasteland. In 1992 the United Nations organised a brief ceasefire. During that year, despite blocking tactics by Aided and the raging war, his presence in Mogadishu did the humanitarian crisis. But it was in December 1992, with the US-led "Operation Restore Hope" that Aided's name featured in the international news pages. By the end of that month, 30,000 US and UN troops from 21 other countries had moved into Somalia. Reconciliation talks were promoted, the Americans pressed flesh with Aided. He said he would disarm but didn't. In June 1993 Aided's USC forces annihilated 23 Pakistani soldiers. The UN forces declared him an



Clan chief... Mohammed Aided in Mogadishu, after his forces took control in 1991

outlaw. But seemingly indomitable violence by UN forces increased friction. One night in early October some 200 Somalis, 18 US Rangers and one Malaysian soldier were killed in a US-led attack on Aided's supporters. Subsequent demands for Aided's arrest were dropped. Seven months later, US forces with-

drew from Somalia. In 1995 the last UN forces pulled out, leaving the country to Aided and his rivals. The war between Aided and Mahdi never ended. And when he declared himself president last year, his own alliance fractured again. His death was one more in a cataclysm born of economic col-

lapse, regional and clan conflict and the catastrophic after-effects of East-West rivalry on the southern hemisphere. **Nigel Fountain**  
Mohammed Farah Aided (Hassan), warlord, born December 15, 1928; died August 1, 1998

Weekend birthdays

Look, now that Steven Berkoff is 63 today, shall we all agree that he's an institution? That's probably more offensive to him than a dismissive review or baiting interview: but in Britain, you cannot be so powerfully different, so much the outsider, for 30 extremely odd years without in the end being seen as permanent, even comforting. His wrath, ire and overwroughtness are now old reliable. And anyway, this year he's mortgaged his flat to back his tenure of the weary Mermaid Theatre — "I'll lose the flat, we won't die", Berkoff has intelligence — those astonishing Kafka productions — and physical intelligence, too, the neck-down acting so rare in Britain; yet no knack for dealing with a world which wants rather less than he is determined to give it. Hence the savage satirical-in-the-Swiffness quality. As he says, he didn't have the education, so the only way out for the ego and the energy was either Kray-type crime or the arts. But does he have the eccentricity for a Brit institution? Well, he keeps a ping-pong table in the rehearsal room. "Very important for the concentration, ping-pong."



**Baroness (P) D. James**, crime novelist, 76; Anthony Saxton, author and journalist, 70; Martin Sheen, actor, 58; Sue Sillman, director, London, 58; Terry Wogan, broadcaster, 58.

**Tomorrow's birthdays:** Queen Elizabeth, the Queen Mother, 96; Georgina Hale, actress, 58; Martin Jarvis, actor, 55; Simon Preston, organist, 58; Mary (Decker) Slaney, athlete, 33; Peter Squires, rugby player, 48; Frances Stewart, economist, 55.

Death Notices

**FRANK MICHAEL**, socialist and noted T-bury doctor, anti-racist activist, died aged on 28th July. He leaves a beloved wife, Joan, and children Michael, David, and Jennifer. He was a member of the Communist Party. Family home only, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21, 22, 23, 24, 25, 26, 27, 28, 29, 30, 31, 32, 33, 34, 35, 36, 37, 38, 39, 40, 41, 42, 43, 44, 45, 46, 47, 48, 49, 50, 51, 52, 53, 54, 55, 56, 57, 58, 59, 60, 61, 62, 63, 64, 65, 66, 67, 68, 69, 70, 71, 72, 73, 74, 75, 76, 77, 78, 79, 80, 81, 82, 83, 84, 85, 86, 87, 88, 89, 90, 91, 92, 93, 94, 95, 96, 97, 98, 99, 100. Church Street, Cheltenham.

Births

**FRANKIE**, Tracey and Stephen, a lovely daughter, Jessica, born in Wellington, New Zealand on 20th July. Mother and baby lovely.

Peter Dobreiner



Peter Dobreiner... gifted with a love of golf

PETER DOBEREINER, who has died aged 75, was golf correspondent for both the Guardian and the Observer over three decades. One of the most erudite of men, he was also one of the most gifted golf writers and possessed a sense of humour which rarely failed to raise a chuckle in his readers. In later life he lived in Pratts Bottom, Kent, a home he bought partially because of its name. Dobreiner was a convivial soul, never happier than when discussing any of his many non-golfing interests over a

bottle of good claret. He did not come from a privileged background, growing up in a poor district of New York before, by way of contrast, coming to this country to read Law at Oxford. During the second world war he was involved in training Britain's Fleet Air Arm, in Pensacola, Florida, before moving to India after the war. He was ostensibly employed on a tea plantation, though it was typical that he returned to this country with an extensive knowledge of the art of distilling spirits. Tea played another, quite

unexpected part in Dobreiner's life when, in 1968, he arrived in Boston to find he had unwittingly fermented a future. He had written a piece for the American magazine Golf Digest about the founding of the Brookline club just outside the city, the venue for that year's US Open. He said that the English foreman had been forced to remind his largely Irish labour force that when laying the turf it was "green side up, boys". The Mayor of Boston did not see the joke and Dobreiner had to try to explain himself to an uncomprehending television interviewer and a Boston storm-in-a-teacup-party fol-

lowed as copies of the article were thrown into the harbour. Through it all, Dobreiner, scarcely able to believe it, retained the ghost of a smile. Before he turned to writing about golf, Dobreiner had worked as a scriptwriter for *That Was The Week That Was*, working with David Frost and receiving an award for his efforts. That award, along with other honours such as a medal from the King of Morocco for promoting "good-will, tourism and international understanding through golf" were hung on a wall in his home, in, of course, the smallest room. Entertainer though he was,

Dobreiner was respected throughout the golf world, not just for his journalism but also for his golf course designs which he turned to on retirement. The first, in Portugal, was built according to doodles on the back of an envelope drawn by Sir Henry Cotton. Dobreiner received no fee for his work; he was merely honouring the maestro. Michael Bonalack, secretary of the Royal and Ancient golf club praised Dobreiner's writing: "He was always the man you wanted to read. He had great flair, but what came through most of all was his tremendous love for the game." His last editor, Jerry

Tarda, of Golf Digest, said: "We thought of him as a giant, a literary giant. He brought great heart and humour to the game, he taught us self-deprecation, how to laugh at ourselves. He always punctured the balloon. He had great insight and while sometimes his arguments seemed silly, a few years later we realised he had been right all the time." He leaves a wife and four children. **David Davies**  
Peter Arthur Bertram Dobreiner, journalist, born November 3, 1925; died August 2, 1998

Face to Faith

Miracles in the mundane

**John Fox**  
ONCE a Catholic always a Catholic they say. Fortunately it's not true. When I was seven, my stepfather died of tuberculosis just before her 21st birthday. Before her funeral I was whisked away by an auntie. Every night for a year after that I cried, praying in a tent of bedclothes. I knew Jesus performed miracles, and if I was good she would come back. Just over a decade later, as a national service officer in the Royal West African Frontier Force in Ghana, I was still going to Roman Catholic communion. The White Fathers, as they called themselves, lived simply if comfortably, but to my late adolescent perception they seemed to be unaware of the old and the poor with open sores and unsym-

pathetic to the many existing West African religions. To a European schoolboy, life was suddenly cheap. Nicely I collected ammunition boxes for burying the bodies of the dead babies or the still births that were frequent in the families of my 30-strong platoon of soldiers. At 20 I stopped going to Mass. Now I'm 67. It is frequently said that we live in "a post-religious age," but I never quite know what to say when people ask me if I am religious. I think I am. Although I have no wish ever again to be associated with any religious institution, Religion seems to cause violence. Maybe we would be better off without it altogether. If so, what other patterns would we need to use to prevent us becoming dizzy when contemplating the void? After 30 years as a theatre director of large scale, site specific celebratory events involving thousands of participants

in fire shows, carnivals and lantern processions, I am looking at rites of passage. Many spectator sports can be distractions, as addictive and time-consuming as any religion or drug. It's easy to be drawn to large scale entertainments, commensured by the arts market, when instead we could be improving those crossroad ceremonies such as namings, betrothals or funerals, where we need to shout and share our humanity with wider congregations. In English culture many of these necessary ceremonies have become poor, moribund, hypocritical, irrelevant and too expensive. We have started with death. After experiencing many conveyor belt type funerals, I've written a practical manual docu-

menting how much control and choice we can have over such rites, once we free ourselves from taboos and outmoded traditions. The book draws on powerful anecdotal

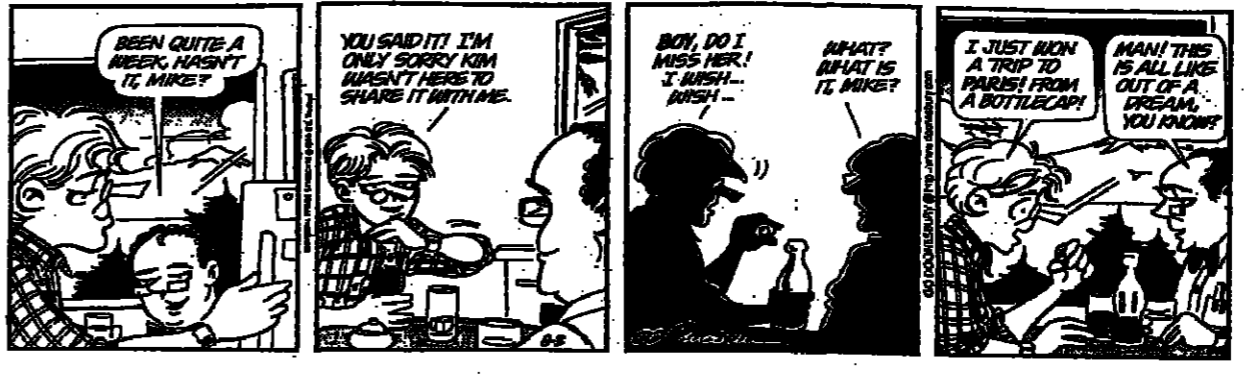
and personal examples from many correspondents. It suggests ritual sequences, aesthetic artefacts (such as painted coffins, handmade urns, bereavement lanterns, papercuts and wooden shrouds), and alternative burial sites. It puts funerary rites into an appropriate historical and legal context. It questions the universal practices of embalming with formaldehyde and burial in over-priced chipboard coffins. The taboo of death is maintained to a considerable extent by professional undertakers and priests. Facing up to our own deaths, and designing our own funeral in consultation with our friends and family is far from morbid. Retirement, leaving home, stopping work (either through choice or redundancy) changing jobs, changing status, reaching 50, moving or building a house, divorcing — as well as in the traditional areas of birth, baptism, coming of age, marrying or dying, we could all benefit from considered declarations of our position with a sympathetic group. The question for a fragmented society is not whether we need rites of passage cere-

monies, but rather what form should they take and who should provide them? With this in mind we are constructing a permanent building for holding new ceremonies. We are now at the design stage. We plan to re-furbish a training centre for the "celebratory arts" where local people and some "specialist celebrants" may learn to facili-

tate ceremonies for themselves and others. The experience of writing our manual was humbling. Once we stopped assuming religion had to be the stuff of gables and pieties, institutions and retributions, and realised the need to reclaim a sense of the sacred to inform secular rites, we came to understand that many of our neighbours have their own "religious" sense of the inexplicable. Using intuition, many people experience great wonder, not just when their children are born and they fall in love. Nor just when faced with strange coincidences and before "awesome nature" but also in everyday surprises and simple communication with friends.

For many of us, the daily grind, ambition, our careers, the news, the welter of the trivial, obscures the central focus. But once removed from this clutter, many of us share a sense of the miraculous. John Fox is a founder of Welfare State International and has just published, with Sue Gill, *The Dead Good Funerals Book*

Doonesbury



BY GARRY TRUDEAU

# Money Guardian

Home repossessions may be down, but as the market picks up lenders seem increasingly inclined to take mortgagors in arrears to court

## Still jobless, homeless and in debt

Rachel Baird

**A**LTHOUGH lenders claim the number of homes repossessed has stabilised, 1,100 fewer in the first half of this year than a year ago — almost 1,000 homeowners are still losing their homes each week.

Equally worrying is the claim by the National Association of Citizens Advice Bureaux that "there are increasing signs of lenders taking court action within weeks rather than months".

Announcing this week's figures, which showed that 24,100 homes were repossessed in the first half of this year, Adrian Coles, the director general of the Council of Mortgage Lenders, rebutted claims that lenders had begun to increase their possession activity in response to a rising housing market. He argued that borrowers should be "reassured" by both the fall in repossessions and the 10 per cent reduction in mortgage arrears. But Mr Coles admitted that "a backlog of problems still remain", adding that there were also "concerns" over the future impact of last year's cutbacks in the income support safety net for unemployed borrowers, particularly at a time of "greater employment uncertainty".

Unemployment is the largest single cause of mortgage arrears, according to a quarterly survey of 3,000 people counselled by mortgage advice provider independent Counselling Services.

Redundancy pushed James Smith, one of those recently repossessed, into arrears with his mortgage. He left the Newcastle upon Tyne home where he lived for eight years on 11 June 1996, one day before his eviction under a repossession order obtained by mortgage lender Hill Samuel Bank.

He had not worked since January, when he was diag-

### What to do in a crisis

**N**ICK Pearson, manager of the CAB's London Money Advice Support Unit, advises people with mortgage difficulties to:

- Contact your lender as soon as possible and explain the problem.
- Prioritise your mortgage repayments (and repayments of other loans secured on your home) above all your other debts.
- Write down what you owe to all your creditors, what you need to spend and what your income is. Then offer reduced repayments to creditors whose loans are not secured on your home.
- If you can't afford your full mortgage repayments, work out what you can afford and tell your lender. If possible, support what you say with details of your in-

come, other debts and spending.

- Never ignore documents about your mortgage from your lender or from a court. If you don't understand them, contact your local Citizens Advice Bureau (details in the local telephone directory).
- The Council Of Mortgage Lenders also stresses the importance of contacting your lender immediately about problems. It warns people not to take out further loans in order to pay their regular mortgage payments, as this will make a debt problem worse. The CML has a leaflet about help available if you are in difficulty.

*Assistance With Mortgage Repayments, from Council of Mortgage Lenders, 3 Savile Row, London W1X 1AF.*

nosed with arthritis of the spine, although he did try to get work. Since 1991 when he was made redundant, Mr Smith had built up mortgage arrears of £2,900 on his two Hill Samuel mortgages (together worth £20,000).

He took out the original mortgage in 1988, when he was a builder. In 1991 he lost his job and became a window cleaner, earning £36 a week.

According to Citizens Advice Bureau adviser Liz Dug-

Shields county court in April, it emerged that the lawyer representing Hill Samuel did not realise Mr Smith was on invalidity benefit (because of his arthritis). The judge ordered that Mr Smith should pay a set amount to Hill Samuel each month, but it was less than what was due under his mortgage agreement.

Hill Samuel appealed against this to Newcastle Crown Court. The Crown Court judge granted the bank a repossession order, but only because the law forced him to, Mr Smith and his CAB adviser argue.

### 'Banks should treat people as human beings, not names and numbers'

dale, who handled Mr Smith's case, he did keep in touch with Hill Samuel and made regular payments towards his mortgage, although less than the £176 a month he owed.

The courts were sympathetic towards Mr Smith's problems and Hill Samuel had to go to court twice to get the repossession order it wanted.

At the first hearing at North

During the fight for his home he suffered from sleepless nights, severe headaches, weight loss and an inability to socialise properly. He said his impression was that lenders were not bothered about their actions' effects on people's lives. Banks should "treat people as human beings, and not as names and numbers", he said.

However, Hill Samuel refused to deal with the CAB on the grounds that the mortgage was in the joint names of Mr Smith and his wife (despite their separation). Under the Data Protection Act, said the bank, it needed Mrs Smith's permission to talk to the CAB.

For the same reason, Hill Samuel could not discuss Mr Smith's case with Money Guardian. However, the bank said: "Eviction is only considered as a last resort, when customers have missed many payments and are in arrears by a substantial number of months." It did accept reduced mortgage payments, "sometimes for lengthy periods".



Evicted... James Smith's circumstances had no impact on his case PHOTOGRAPH: WILL WALKER

## Why there can be no surrender on endowment front

Rachel Baird

**S**TRAPPED for cash borrowers who fall into arrears frequently surrender their endowment policies as well.

Overall, more than two-thirds of people with an endowment policy surrender it early, despite the consensus that surrendering should be a last resort. Part of the problem is that people are not aware of the alternatives which, together with ceasing to make payments to the endowment provider, involves taking whatever you have paid into the policy, minus commission and other charges.

It can give you less than you have paid into an endowment policy — or even nothing at all. Charges tend to be heaviest at the start of an endowment policy and you would have to hold a policy for seven years before it was worth more than the premiums paid in, according to the Consumers' Association Which?

### It should be a last resort but most people are not sufficiently aware of alternatives

For people who need money, partially surrendering a with-profits endowment gives them some of the money they have paid into the policy while continuing to pay premiums. This, obviously, produces a smaller lump sum when the policy matures.

Another alternative to surrendering, "paying up" a policy, allows you to stop paying premiums while leaving what you have already paid invested with the life company. Your money should grow, but not by as much as it would if you continued paying premiums.

If you are thinking of surrendering an endowment but want to know more about the alternatives, ask your endowment provider.

*Association of Policy Market Makers, tel 0171 739 3949.*

value of at least £1,500, and to have been going for seven years.

The Association of Policy Market Makers has free leaflets for people buying or selling an endowment and can arrange for three independent valuations of a policy.

Life companies (which provide the endowment part of an endowment mortgage) and building societies do not do enough to alert people to alternatives to surrender, argues Association chairman David Beale. He wants life companies to tell people who get quotations about how much they would get if they surrendered. He lists Norwich Union, General Accident Life, Friends Provident, Pearl, Scottish Provident, Commercial Union and Clerical Medical and Refuges as companies that do mention the second-hand endowment market to people who inquire about surrendering. The Association of British Insurers also has a leaflet, Life Insurance Surrender Values, which outlines the alternatives to surrender.

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## Lenders build on house price recovery

Richard Miles

**C**ASHBACKS in the mortgage market may soon disappear as Abbey National, the UK's second-largest lender, said this week that it was reducing payments for some borrowers.

The move comes amid growing evidence that the housing market is well on its way to recovery. Latest figures from Halifax show that house prices rose by 0.5 per cent during July.

From early September, home owners wanting to remortgage with Abbey National using its standard

variable 6.99 per cent home loan will qualify for a cashback of just 2 per cent if the loan is less than 75 per cent of their property's value, against a current level of 5 per cent. Those remortgaging with loans of between 75 per cent and 85 per cent will be eligible for a mere 1 per cent. But the cashback for new borrowers remains 5 per cent.

The Chelsea Building Society has reduced to 14 per cent the discount offered on its two-year discount plus 2 per cent cashback mortgage. The new rate is 5.49 per cent.

NatWest has introduced the first mainstream mortgage linked to the Base Rate which guarantees a rate equivalent

to 1 per cent above its base rate, currently 6.75 per cent, for the full term of the loan. However, this is available only to new customers and through its telephone-based direct mortgage service.

NatWest has unveiled a series of discounts for the first three years of a loan, starting at 2.2 per cent on a 75 per cent loan, falling to 1.8 per cent for a 85 per cent mortgage. But borrowers who opt for the discount must tie themselves into the bank's variable rate until the end of January 2003. It also has a couple of two-year fixes, either 7.29 per cent with no ties-in or 4.75 per cent with a tie-in to NatWest's variable rate for the following five

years. First Direct has trimmed its variable rate to 6.49 per cent, undercutting most of its high street rivals. The new rate is available to both new and existing customers.

Yorkshire Bank has pared back its variable rate to 6.99 per cent from 7.25 per cent, while direct provider First-Mortgage claims the lowest variable rate at 5.95 per cent. This comes with no redemption penalties or fees.

Norwich & Peterborough has overhauled its mortgage range though its variable rate remains unchanged at 6.74 per cent. The first of the new loans is a 4 per cent discount until October 1 next year or a 4 per

cent cashback. Customers can also opt for a 2 per cent discount until the same date, or 2 per cent cashback.

First-time buyers will get a 1.6 per cent discount for three years from Birmingham Midlands, a current rate of 5.39 per cent. Borrowers get a £200 cashback plus a refunded valuation fee. A sliding scale of discounts is available on Skipton's 8.84 per cent variable rate. It is offering 3 per cent in their first year, 2 per cent in the second and down to 1 per cent in the third year. The loan comes with free unemployment cover.

*Money Guardian is edited by Margaret Hughes*

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# Sears hounded into selling a soft Puppy

The retail empire's collapse could lead to the loss of up to 1,000 jobs, reports LISA BUCKINGHAM

**S**EARS, the hard-pressed retail group, yesterday sold its Hush Puppy footwear business, despite the patronage of Chancellor Kenneth Clarke and unlikely wearers such as musician David Bowie and actress Sharon Stone, has failed to perform.

The retailer — whose high-street outlets include Selfridges and Richards — also managed to get rid of a small number of the unwanted shoe shops which had been sold to Facia but which have come back to haunt it following the latter's collapse.

branded shoes will continue to be supplied to its department store concessions and Shoe City stores. The retail and wholesale sell-offs will result in a profit of only £500,000. But the other deal, announced yesterday, involves Sears paying to have unwanted shops taken off its hands.

The company said it was selling Stylo 61 outlets which are currently operating as Saxone, Freeman Hardy Willis and Trueform. The Yorkshire shoe group run by the Ziff family.

Meanwhile, in a deal that will bring in £3.5 million, the wholesale Hush Puppy operation is being sold to the Hush Puppy brand name owner, Wolvorne World Wide.

For new forgoes with a taste for the old fashioned, Sears has, however, secured a deal by which the



Basset fans... Endorsements from clients Sharon Stone, David Bowie and the soft-shoed Chancellor failed to tip the balance for 'restructured' Sears. MAIN PHOTOGRAPH: SEAN SMITH

## Saturday Notebook

# Continental on Target

Edited by Mark Milner

**T**HREE months ago, or thereabouts, the Bank of England warned that whether or not the UK signed up, the City's financial markets needed to start planning for the single currency.

Though the paper, written by John Townsend, the Bank's deputy director for market operations, could hardly be described as an alarm call, it did have an underlying note of urgency. With good reason. The French financial establishment showed why this week.

From a series of reports it is clear that the French are planning to make sure that when the switch to the single currency — the euro — comes, they will be prepared to do business in the new currency from January 4, 1999 — the first trading day after the scheduled date for the irrevocable locking of exchange rates laid down in the Maastricht treaty.

French thinking is clear. "All financial markets will switch rapidly to the euro from the beginning of 1999, paced along by the implementation of a single monetary policy in euros and the conversion of public debt into the euro," according to Bank of France deputy governor Herve Hanoun.

The French financial system is aiming to have its euro strategy in place by later this year but already it is coming up with some practical proposals. French ministers and officials have always taken the line that those investors holding securities denominated in ecus (European currency units) will be able to swap them on a one-for-one basis for the euro as soon as the latter is introduced.

Now French financial institutions are calling on the French treasury to start issuing more government debt in ecus. The French authorities have long tried to encourage the growth of euro-denominated markets in Paris, rather in the way the Bank of England has done in London.

The aim is clear. The bigger the French-based market in ecus becomes, the bigger will be Paris's share of the euro-denominated markets when European monetary union takes place.

France seems to be seeking to exploit a possible competitive advantage for Paris over London if the pound opts out of the single currency.

One piece of financial infrastructure being worked on by the European Monetary Institute — the European Union's putative central bank — is a concept called Target or, to give it its full title, Trans-European Automated Real Time Gross Settlement Express Transfer System.

Target will be a Europe-wide system capable of the same day settlement of cross-border obligations between financial institutions. But as a May paper from an EMU working party noted, "The main objective of the Target system will be to serve the needs of the single monetary policy in Stage Three (of monetary union)."

That raises the question about access to Target. Should countries which do not sign up for the single currency have the same access as those

which have. And what about those countries — such as Switzerland — which are not members of the European Union.

France and Germany are understood to be arguing that those who do not sign up for monetary union should have only limited access to the system. They argue that if the European central bank imposes minimum reserve requirements (obligatory deposits with the central bank) on banks within the single currency area — as is the case in Germany at present, for example — then banks outside the single currency bloc which do not have to meet minimum reserve requirements will have a comparative advantage if they are allowed equal access to Target.

On the other hand, as Target will be the mechanism by which the ECB controls the supply of euros to the financial markets, any restrictions on access for outsiders could make it more difficult for their financial institutions to borrow euros for trading — hitting London's ability to develop euro markets.

Much of the technical detail about how Target will operate has still to be worked out. Much of the discussion will take place among central bank technicians meeting under the auspices of the EMU. But as its designers seek to build a safe and secure Europe-wide system of payments settlement at least part of the discussions will be influenced by the rivalries over Europe's financial business.

## Issue of risk

**T**HE Alternative Investment Market reached a notable landmark yesterday when its membership roll reached the 300 mark. Its capitalisation stands at a very healthy £4 billion.

AIM's success, in little more than a year, is to be applauded but an accident-free future of seamless growth in membership and share values should not be taken for granted.

At one point, earlier in the summer, it seemed as though any company which could put together a press release was coming to the market. Nor did there seem to be any lack of shareholder appetite for such firms — no matter what they did or who the management was.

The last thing that AIM needs is a serious dilution of the quality of its list, undermining the market's biggest achievement in providing small and growing firms with an invaluable source of capital.

The speed at which the market itself has grown and the enthusiasm with which investors — both private and institutional — have snapped up new issues, were inevitably going to cool off. After such heady progress a market correction — to use the jargon for a sharp fall in prices — cannot be ruled out.

In the last few weeks a welcome caution appears to have emerged. A number of new issues have been pulled altogether, while others have been recalled and priced more realistically.

Investors can play their part too in the new realism. Investing in companies quoted on AIM is always going to be more risky than buying shares in the likes of GEC or Marks & Spencer. All the more reason, then, to give the prospectus careful inspection before snapping up an AIM issue. Regular reviews of any holdings would not go amiss either.

# Big Bang 2 on right course

Paul Murphy

**T**HE Stock Exchange confirmed yesterday that it is on course to launch a new trading system for the London stock market — dubbed Big Bang II — next summer.

After publishing the results of its second round of consultation with member broking firms, big investors and representatives of smaller shareholders, it is planning to publish the details of the new service this autumn.

around the time the City marks the tenth anniversary of the original Big Bang.

Brokers and institutions will then have nine months to prepare for market participants posting orders to buy and sell shares in the FTSE 100 companies on an electronic "order book". This replaces the quote-driven system, where marketmaking firms alone advertise at what prices they are willing to buy or sell a particular share. The new system is likely to be switched on over the August bank holiday weekend next summer.

The exchange yesterday claimed "wide market support" for its proposals, which had to be reworked after the acrimonious departure of former chief executive Michael Lawrence last autumn. Leading stockbroking firms had accused Mr Lawrence of an "order book" strategy, intended to bring City more into line with other big financial centres.

Around 100 brokers and investors responded to the exchange's request for comments on how the order-driven system will operate. The responses bore the scars

of last year's boardroom row at the exchange, with some of the biggest marketmakers still aggrieved at the move away from quote-driven trading.

The investment banking arm of Barclays, BZW, stated: "We believe the current proposals will require a number of changes if they are to advance the interests not only of the London Stock Exchange but the users of the market."

Merrill Lynch, the US investment bank which last year took over London's largest marketmaking firm, Smith New Court, remains worried

that London's reputation, as a market where risk capital is freely available, remains at risk itself.

"Central to our acceptance of the idea of an order matching facility on the LSE was the conviction that the culture of capital commitment, which has been critical to London's pre-eminence, should not be sacrificed. Without it, liquidity may be so damaged that competing centres will reap the benefits which London may never be able to retrieve," Merrill stated.

The Americans argue that the Exchange has much work

to do in re-balancing the various obligations, with market-makers currently having to provide constant prices at which they are prepared to trade, and accompanying privileges such as avoiding tax and being able to borrow stock.

"If the privileges under-shoot the obligations, liquidity will be damaged. If liquidity is damaged then the market will be damaged. If the market is damaged the receipts from stamp duty will fall commensurately. This scenario is in nobody's interests," Merrill said.

## US jobs data aid markets and Fed

Mark Tran in New York

**T**HE markets heaved a sigh of relief yesterday as the US jobs report for July eased Wall Street fears of an overheating economy and took the pressure off the Federal Reserve to raise rates at its next policy meeting.

The unemployment rate edged up 0.1 per cent to 5.4 per cent last month as the economy created 193,000 jobs, just under Wall Street estimates of 200,000.

For once, the job figures did not unsettle the markets. Previous jobs reports, where the US economy generated new jobs at a surprisingly rapid rate, upset the markets with the prospect of unsustainable growth.

July's jobs figures, together with this week's slew of other economic data, provided further evidence of a slowdown in the economy after it grew a brisk 4.2 per cent annual rate in the second quarter.

With the economy losing momentum, some analysts assessed that the Federal Reserve will be off the hook when it considers interest rates at its policy meeting on August 20. The Fed normally does not raise rates in an election year to avoid political controversy.

Some economists, though, did not rule out a modest tightening of 0.25 per cent to 0.50 per cent in the federal funds rate, which banks charge each other for loans.

"There are no signs of serious wage inflation, so it's a tough call for the Fed," said Wayne Ayers, chief economist with the Bank of Boston.

"But chairman Alan Greenspan believes in pre-emptive action while the numbers are good. He must know we're on a cusp and he may want to take out extra insurance."

In another sign of economic slowdown, the Commerce Department said yesterday that consumer spending fell 0.2 per cent in July — the first drop since the winter blizzards kept shoppers at home.

## Dealers break from sterling

Richard Thomas Economics Correspondent

**D**EALERS heading for their holidays sent the pound tumbling on the foreign exchanges yesterday, pouring money into the safe havens of German and Swiss currencies.

By the close of trading in London, sterling was down by one and a half pennings to close at DM2.2820. Against the dollar, the pound dipped slightly to close at \$1.5435.

Amid fresh fears of the impact of BSE on British industry, traders said the core European currencies looked more attractive. And with a number of market players on holiday next week, analysts said positions were being left in secure berths.

David Bloom, foreign exchange expert at brokers HSBC James Capel, said: "There was certainly a holiday effect here, and the market was generally a bit nervous anyway. The remaining

whiffs of 'Euro-row' this week probably didn't help the pound either."

However, after two days of selling, most market-watchers thought that next week could see some recuperation for sterling.

Jarvis Stretch, currency strategist at NatWest Markets, said: "The pound has seen a wave of selling and is still looking shaky, but some of the pressure is likely to recede now."

Revelations this week about new research findings on "mad cow disease" led the European Union to warn of a possible delay in the removal of the ban on UK beef.

This was seen by many analysts as an excuse to take some profits from sterling, which has been on a steadily rising trend since the original scare.

Mr Bloom said the German mark's strength would annoy the authorities, who are trying to talk down the currency to ease the pressure on Germany's hard-pressed manufacturers.

## Electra's bid for HMSO preferred

Lisa Buckingham

**R**UPERT Pennant-Rea, who was drummed out of the Bank of England deputy governorship after revelations of an extra-marital affair, will become chairman of HMSO following Electra Fleming's emergence as preferred bidder.

The Electra consortium, which is thought to be bidding £70 million for the government's publishing business, is fronted by Mr Pennant-Rea (pictured), who was recently refused a visa for the US because of business connections with Cuba. It has also recruited Robert Thian, the former North West Water chief executive.

Electra said yesterday it hoped to complete the deal within a few weeks. A spokeswoman said that, although the consortium would instal a chairman and chief executive, it



would retain some of the existing management. Electra's bid topped two other serious contenders — a consortium led by NatWest and SI — but will still leave the government about £30 million short of the £100 million it had hoped to raise from the privatisation.

It is estimated that the new owners will make redundant up to 1,000 of HMSO's 2,600 staff.

## Lloyd's rescue dispute

Lisa Buckingham

**C**ONTROVERSY erupted again at Lloyd's of London yesterday as the auditors, Pannell Kerr Forster, dismissed claims that they were making an 11th-hour attempt to become involved in the market's rescue package, to avoid being sued for £274 million by unhappy investors.

The association representing disaffected investors on Dick Hazell's syndicate 190, which suffered huge asbestos-related losses, had claimed that PKF had approached Lloyd's asking to contribute to the £3.2 billion settlement offer.

But the association, and a spokesman for Lloyd's, said this last-minute intervention had been rejected, as copies of the detailed settlement offer had been posted to 34,000 Names earlier in the week.

The aggrieved investors on syndicate 190 will receive no specific compensation for their losses, totalling £274 million.

Pannell Kerr Forster, despite being a prominent Lloyd's auditor, is not involved in the £115 million contribution to the offer made by other accountability firms. PKF's chairman, Richard Pearson, denied yesterday that his firm had been attempting a last-minute participation in the offer in order to

shield itself against potential litigation.

He said PKF was simply "exploring with Lloyd's... their understanding of the reconstruction and renewal document". Mr Pearson said the settlement was supposed to mean that litigation should cease. "When more litigation is suddenly threatened it is a matter of concern, so well worth exploring."

The accountability firm said it had not received a writ from the Names' association and that any claim would be strenuously resisted. The Lloyd's market appeared to be under the impression, however, that PKF had been seeking terms for participation in the settlement.

## AIM growth prompts fears

Sarah Whitebloom

**T**HE Alternative Investment Market, which was launched in June last year, yesterday announced the 200th firm had joined the list. But concerns are building over how the £4 billion small firms market is holding up in the face of such rapid growth.

It is understood that the Stock Exchange has privately expressed worries that corporate advisers are not adequately policing the AIM firms for which they act as "nominated advisers".

Such problems would ring alarm bells at the Exchange since, under AIM's rules, nominated advisers are the

cornerstone of regulation. Any hint that supervision was being neglected would undermine the entire basis of the new market.

Because of this the Exchange is believed to have taken immediate, private action and it is still carrying out an annual review of the nominated advisers.

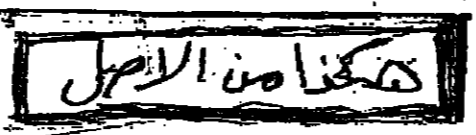
Such is the sensitivity of the subject that the Exchange refused to comment yesterday.

The sheer number of AIM companies has made proper monitoring difficult for some advisers. But fears over the quality of nominated advisers led regulation to be tightened before the market came about.

According to one AIM specialist: "There's an awful lot of pressure on nominated advisers. They are simply being asked to do too much... the Exchange should do some of the work itself."

Michael Chickens, a director of Neill Clerk Capital, the leading nominated adviser with 25 AIM companies on its books, claimed the Exchange has never voiced any concerns to his firm about its work. But he admitted: "There has been a lot more work than we envisaged on day one. But we have set ourselves up to cope with it."

Rumours in the City suggest that the Exchange's annual review will see firms publicly reprimanded because of blunders in the past year.



# Life's a drag for taxed Spanish smokers

Julia Hayley in Madrid reports a tobacco shortage

TEMPERS were frayed in Spain this week. Temperatures climbed well past 40 C as millions of cars snarled the roads to start the August exodus to coast and mountains.

To add to the misery, many of the slowly roasting drivers risked being writhing out cigarettes — no joke in a nation of hardened smokers. A government decision late last week to raise tobacco and alcohol taxes to cover a large deficit prompted a run on cigarettes.

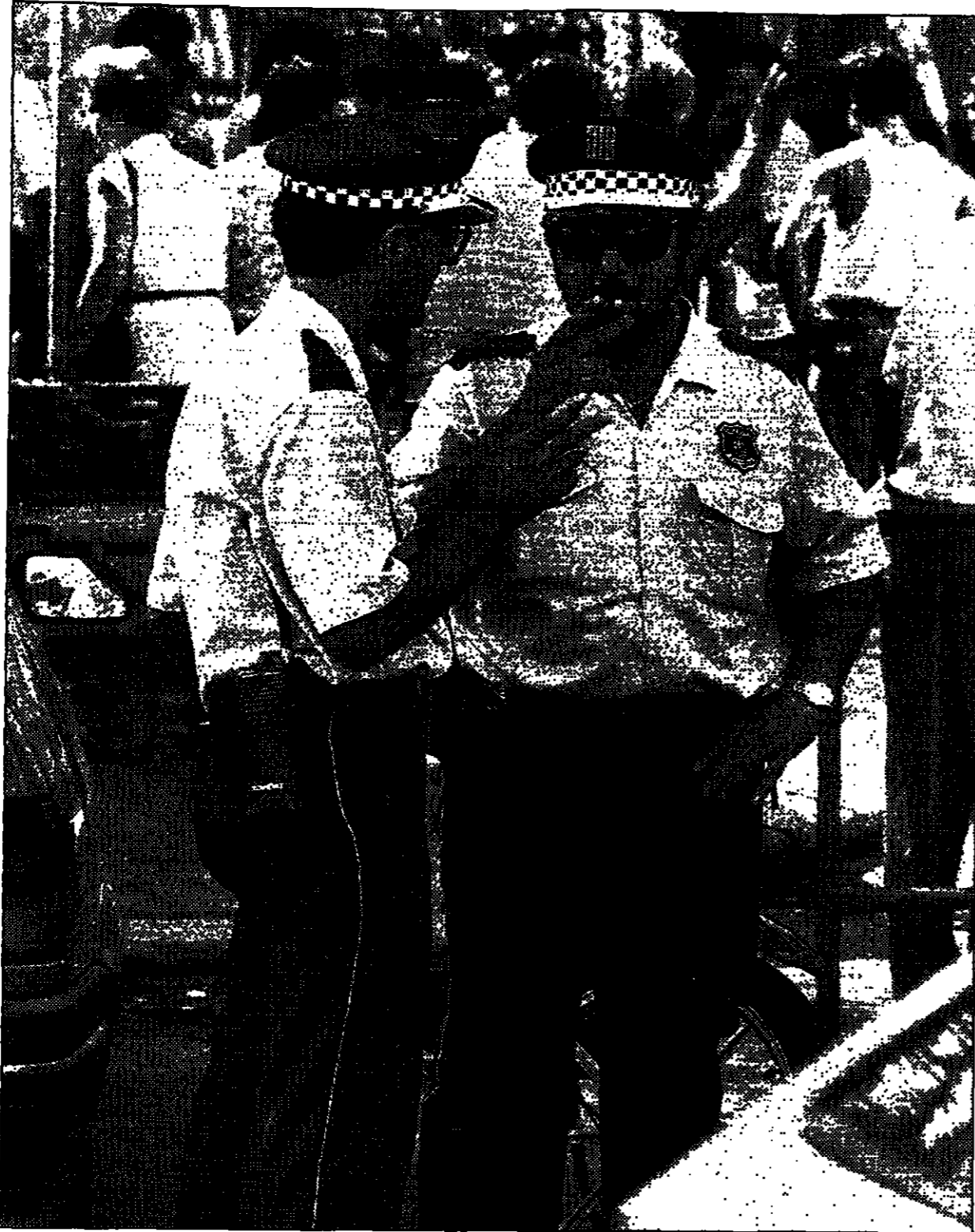
On Monday, tobacconists rushed to warehouses belonging to the partly state-owned tobacco distributor, Tabacalera, to stock up before the price rise took effect, only to find them closed.

In turn, smokers were faced with "closed" signs at tobacconists across the country. Some owners had simply run out of stock, although Tabacalera said normal pre-ordered deliveries continued and it was only instant-demand warehouses that had to shut.

On Tuesday, the day before the price rises came into effect, Tabacalera delivered some 37 million packs to shops, more than twice the usual amount for the time of year.

The panic has now eased, but smokers are smarting from having to pay an extra 30 pesetas (18p) for a pack of black-tobacco macadés — although Tabacalera said yesterday it would not pass on the increased costs for blond tobacco, at least for the time being, which analysts reckon could boost market share but hit profits.

The flurry of sales was scant comfort for Tabacalera, whose share price tumbled 17 per cent in three days as investors bailed out. Spain has made substan-



The heat is on... Police officers taking a break in bustling Barcelona

PHOTOGRAPH: TOM JENKINS

tial progress in cracking down on the contraband trade, but each tax rise gives extra impetus to the smugglers.

Spanish smokers — estimated to be 30-35 per cent of the population — are a recalcitrant lot. They are by no means the social outcasts they would be in some other countries.

Bars are routinely awash with smoke, few restaurants have no-smoking sections and only rarely will a non-smoker complain if the

next table adds unwanted flavour to his or her meal. No-smoking signs in underground stations are usually ignored, although for some reason they are acknowledged inside the trains. Passengers about to get off line up at the train door, cigarettes in mouths and lighters poised, so as not to suffer abstinence longer than necessary.

Former Socialist prime minister Felipe Gonzalez was a heavy cigarette smoker and his conserva-

tive successor, Jose Maria Aznar, who when he was elected admitted only to an occasional cigar after lunch, appears to be gradually increasing his consumption.

When Mr Aznar decided to raise tobacco and alcohol taxes last week he said it was the previous government's fault.

It was the only way to cover the 721 billion peseta hole he had discovered in the accounts of the public works, agriculture and

other ministries, and keep the budget deficit in check. Not everyone is complaining. Bari, a young West African who sells contraband smokes in a central Madrid metro station, says price rises will help him over the slack holiday period.

"This pack of Marlboro costs 350 pesetas in the shops now and I'm selling it for 225," he says with a grin. "People have been buying three or four packs at a time these last few days. Why don't you have one?"

# France slides ever deeper into privatisation mire

Crédit Lyonnais's sale may be next on 'desperate measures' list, says ALEX DUVAL SMITH in Paris

RUMOURS are confirmed that the French government is preparing a rush privatisation of the troubled Crédit Lyonnais bank, it will be the latest in a long line of sell-offs motivated more by desperation than design.

The bank — which last month found a buyer for its most attractive asset, the MGM film studios — has failed to pull through after two ill-conceived restructuring plans costing taxpayers up to Fr100 million (Fr13.5 million) since last year.

Analysts believe the privatisation plan will see the bank part with between 20 and 25 per cent of its capital by the end of this year — probably to foreign buyers, because the CL's main competitors, Banque Nationale de Paris and Société Générale, have shunned all recent approaches.

Faced with losses of Fr3 billion this year and Fr2 billion in 1997, the French government has little choice. A third official restructuring plan would almost certainly be rejected by competition watchdogs in Brussels.

Rumours of the government's plans for the Crédit Lyonnais surfaced only a week after it decided sell the Compagnie Générale Maritime shipping group, which has absorbed more than Fr4 billion in aid.

While CMG is in worse shape than other recently privatised companies, the right-

wing government, battling to reduce its budget deficit and meet Maastricht criteria, sorely needs to win over potential investors.

Yet the performance of shares from the 10 privatisations since 1993 have failed to persuade. With the exception of four companies, including Société Générale bank and TF1 television.

But one investment adviser, Jean-Jacques Avedissian, said the performance of privatised companies, even including those sold in the late 1990s, had been very uneven. "Overall, it is still better to have shares in privatised companies than to invest in bonds, but you cannot talk of anything better than average progress among the privatised industries," he said.

The industrial sector, including Pechiney, which has benefited from a strengthened US dollar since December 1995, shows signs of long-term progress. But it also includes some of the worst performers. Renault's share value since its partial flotation in November 1994 has fallen by 34 per cent. Shares in Usinor-Sacilor, Europe's leading steel group, are worth 24.4 per cent less than in June last year.

While the privatisation list announced in 1993 still officially stands, dates for the sell-offs are being moved further forward. Tipped to be privatised next, probably in the autumn, is the defence and electronics group Thomson.

## French privatisation: not a one-way bet

Date	Company	Offer price, Fr.	Price, Fr 1/8/98	% change
Oct 93	Crédit Lyonnais de France	388	412	+6.74
Oct 93	Banque Nationale de Paris	240	179	-25.42
Nov 93	Philippe-Beaume	135	131.50	-2.59
Jan 94	Elf Aquitaine	365	362.50	-0.64
May 94	Union des Assurances de Paris	152	105.50	-30.59
Nov 94	Renault	165	117.50	-28.79
Feb 95	Sellin	128	261	+71.32
June 95	Usinor-Sacilor	86	70.50	-18.02
Feb 96	Pechiney	187	208	+11.23
June 95	Assurances Générales de France	128	137.70	+7.58

# Outflow to EU alarms Norway

NORWEGIAN companies' investments abroad surged above declining inward investment for the first time last year, the Norwegian Employers Federation said this week, sparking fears that the oil-rich country's famous "ne" to European Union membership may be doing long-term damage to the economy.

Preliminary figures from a federation survey showed Norwegian companies invested some Nkr15.5 billion (Fr3.57 billion) abroad in 1997, more than double the 1993 total of Nkr6.5 billion.

The 1998 figure is set to reach a new record, boosted by several big deals including the engineering group Kvaerner's purchase of Trafalgar House.

Foreign companies' investments in Norway tumbled, however, from Nkr10.2 billion in 1993 to Nkr6.5 billion last year, with the vast majority in the oil and natural gas sector.

Norwegians voted 52 per cent to 46 per cent in early 1995 against joining the EU. On the face of it, that decision has done the country nothing but good.

Norway's economy grew by a robust 3.7 per cent in 1997, against the EU average of 2 per cent, and unemployment fell from 5.4 per cent to 4.5 per cent, about half the EU average. Exports, which account

for 40 per cent of Norway's GDP, were up by 8 per cent, and the world's largest crude oil exporter after Saudi Arabia expects to have paid off its national debt by next year.

"In one sense, the dramatic increase in Norwegian investment abroad can be seen as a sign of that strength," said Knut Sorlie, assistant director of the federation's international division.

"The economy has been performing very well since the early 1990s, companies have been making big profits and they're expanding internationally."

But the surge could also be explained by the No vote, with companies opting for more direct access to the European trade bloc, Mr Sorlie warned.

"Almost 50 per cent of our foreign investment has been into EU countries," he said.

The survey results had raised worries that Norway's non-membership could lead to "a wholesale flagging-out of Norwegian industry", Mr Sorlie said.

Rumours have abounded in recent months that Kvaerner, one of the country's leading industrial conglomerates, is considering moving its worldwide headquarters out of Norway.

"We really don't want that sort of expertise and capital to leave the country," Mr Sorlie said. "Investment abroad should lead to increased exports for Norway, not to a decline in our industrial base."

# Saxony fights EU over car plant aid

THE east German state of Saxony was yesterday alleged to be jeopardising the country's annual billions of industrial subsidies after defying Brussels over payments to Volkswagen.

While the car manufacturer was accused of "blackmail" for lobbying hard to exact the subsidies, Monika Wulf-Mathies, one of Germany's European Union commissioners, said the Saxon government was guilty of "fundamentalist opposition" to Brussels and was endangering "Germany's involvement in European policy."

The Saxony government of Kurt Biedenkopf, a prominent figure in Chancellor Helmut Kohl's Christian Democratic party, branded the Brussels commission a "Euro-dictatorship" this week after the EU threatened to go to the European court over the vexed issue of DM241 million (Fr105 million) in subsidies to Volkswagen, which is building two car plants in the eastern state.

The funds are part of an overall subsidy package of nearly DM800 million in state aid to Volkswagen, but Brussels has approved only DM540 million.

The Dresden government's decision to dole out the aid regardless of the protests of Karel Van Miert, the EU competition commissioner, has shocked the political estab-

lishment in Bonn and Brussels who fear that former East Germany's preferential treatment in the European subsidies regime will be damaged by the confrontation between Mr Biedenkopf and Brussels.

East German industry is believed to benefit from direct and indirect subsidies totalling DM130 billion a year, according to experts, but increasingly questions are being asked about where much of the money is going, whether it is all necessary, and whether it is in breach of EU competition regulations.

Volkswagen is said to have warned that it would opt to build the new plants in eastern Europe if the subsidies were trimmed, an alleged threat Ms Wulf-Mathies described as blackmail. The Bonn government and the federal economics ministry have also been critical of the Saxon move.

Earlier this year, the bankrupt Bremen shipbuilding group, Vulkan, was found to have diverted hundreds of millions in subsidies for east German acquisitions to its ailing subsidiaries in western Germany.

"The Saxon case could spell the beginning of the end of the generous practice of subsidies for east Germany," the German business daily, Handelsblat, said yesterday. "Germany's credibility in competition issues in Brussels has been gravely damaged again after the diverted subsidies disaster at Bremer Vulkan."

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# Finance Guardian

**Brochures replace battleaxes in the 1990s battle for economic mastery of Britain's far north, writes SARAH RYLE**



'We have got the gun cocked. We just need the target to aim at'  
Falconer Waters

Power failure... Caithness residents say Westminster owes them something after closure of the pioneering Dounreay nuclear plant  
PHOTOGRAPH BY MURDO MCALEOD

## Oil fuels new clash of clans

**C**LAN wars are nothing new in the north of Scotland and before that there were Norsemen happy to make the trip across the North Sea to pillage and pinch the fertile land around the John O' Groats peninsula. Today there is a new battle brewing on this frontier and the stakes are high, even if there are no claymores or wood war-paint involved. This time, the rivalry is being fought out with glossy brochures and marketing task-forces, and the prize is not land but oil money. Caithness, the northernmost mainland county in Britain, is challenging the traditional dominance of Shetland and Orkney as service bases for the oil companies exploring and developing a huge area of the Atlantic. On the tip of the British mainland, Caithness was an ideal place to put a nuclear plant, Dounreay, 41 years ago. Until two years ago, when the plug was pulled on the project, this pioneering outpost of the atomic age provided almost all of the jobs directly or indirectly in the community and boosted the population of Thurso to 10,000. With an economy so dependent on one industry, the 27,000 people of Caithness are desperate to cash in on the

new frontier, which is thought to hold oil and gas reserves equivalent to a third of the North Sea's resources, but in much deeper and much rougher waters. Until now, Shetland has been dominant. This week a long-standing argument over charges, between the islands' terminal, Sullom Voe, and a consortium of companies, was resolved and the firms will continue to use the harbour for their North Sea operations. Shetland's main rival has been Orkney, which recently beat its northern neighbour to a BP contract to service one of the first Atlantic fields to be developed, from Flotta. Neither community regards Caithness as a serious threat. There is also the chance that canny oil tycoons might use Caithness's eagerness to force better terms from Shetland, which has been softened up by the loss of one contract. Captain Robert Selater, Orkney's director of harbours, said Flotta was also concentrating on winning business from the Atlantic fields. "We believe the main competition is from Shetland, but we have a better harbour in Scapa Flow. There is nothing in Caithness at the moment, and it would not seem logical for a terminal to build a terminal when there are already two." But Caithness is not aiming

### Number-crunching laird has left his mark on Thurso

**T**HURSO can claim to have been in the forefront of pioneering economic development long before Dounreay arrived in 1955. The locals say it was a hotbed of innovation, thanks to its 19th century laird, John Sinclair. He is credited with inventing everything from the blueprint for New York to the word statistical. Sinclair (right, from a family painting) came up with it after searching for a term to apply to one of the most detailed surveys of a nation since the Domesday Book. He heard the word in Germany, according to his biographer, Rosalind Mitchison, where it meant information useful to the state. Sinclair used it to cover all data concerned with measuring the happiness of people. Details

about living standards were, in his view, required to promote happiness and prosperity. Such innovation was second nature to Sinclair, whose self-professed first love was "the collecting of useful information" and who was described in the Times as "The Precedent" because he leapt up in Parliament at every opportunity to cite a tedious historical fact. He meddled in all things economic, earning the disdain of celebrity economists like Ricardo and Adam Smith. Sinclair wrote letters of advice to everybody from William Pitt to Sir Walter Scott. In the first case, some of his ideas were taken up, such as the loyalty loan in 1796 and the agricultural board. He suggested that Scott get over the very

recent death of his wife by marrying the dowager duchess of Roxborough. That won him a polite reply but a bitchy mention in Scott's letters, describing his "trade of boring". His contribution to statistical practice was marked. His national account of Scotland ran to 20 volumes and included what is arguably an early version of the present-day Office for National Statistics Family Expenditure Survey. One example listed the expenses of a common labourer, with a wife and four children. It included school fees of 10 shillings for the children and the same amount for the "tear and wear of the man and wife's Sunday clothes". Thurso bears the mark of Sinclair's devotion to order in its street plan, which lo-

cal claim is the original blueprint for New York rather than the more usually cited Edinburgh. The so-called new town was bounded by four streets which surrounded eight streets, running south-west to north-east, and six lanes running at right angles to them. Sinclair spent time in Edinburgh as it was being built, so the link is possible. With his modernising drive, Sinclair, had he been alive today, probably would have embraced Dounreay and the battle for the oil fields. But perhaps the present Caithness promoters would be working hard to keep him and his precedents well away from the marketing side of the operation. *Agricultural Sir John, the life of Sir John Sinclair, by Rosalind Mitchison, 1962*



Waters, who worked with some of them. But, just as the people learned to love Dounreay, the Conservatives closed the plant. Now the population feels let down. The pioneering prototype fast reactor (PFR) was shut two years ago at a cost of 1,500 of the 3,000 direct and indirect jobs. The remaining employees are busy decommissioning the second reactor, closed in 1977, and will also work on winding down the PFR. The plant takes on four apprentices a year. There are now three companies at Dounreay, UKAEA, AEA, and AEA (which announced a record profit increase yesterday of 150 per cent and is to be privatised later this year) and Procord, a support firm, but between them they are expected to employ no more than 1,000 people. Thurso, a technological boom town until 1994, is beginning to feel the effects of the reduction. Mr Waters, aged 45, argued that the official unemployment figures for the area (about 9 per cent and not much above the national average) give a false picture because about 1,200 of the 1,500 lay-offs were early retirements. As a one-time international prize-winning welder, Mr Waters knows a few fighting tricks. The struggle to replace those Dounreay jobs is one he intends to win.

to become an oil-processing terminal. It wants to be the main servicing base for the companies. "We just want a big oil presence in the area," said David Richard-Jones, Caithness's economic development manager. His team has begun to tap potential grant sources so that

the money to build tailored facilities at Scrabster and beyond would be ready to flow should it win contracts. It has been given the go-ahead in principle by grant controllers including the European Commission - Caithness is now classified as an economic region with special needs. "We feel that the Government owes us one after what happened at Dounreay," said Mr Richard-Jones. His pitch to the companies is simple: Caithness is the closest mainland point to the new fields; it has a port at Scrabster which can handle large shipping; an airport at Wick which is half the distance Aberdeen is from the oil and gas fields; a skilled work force available thanks to Dounreay investment in its colleges of further education. "We think the companies could halve their costs by coming to Caithness instead of Shetland or Orkney because they would not face the considerable costs involved in servicing island bases. We also have the technological expertise and Dounreay is already doing work for the oil industry on the engineering front."

Waters, vice-chairman of Caithness Economic Development Forum and deputy provost of Thurso. "We just need the target to aim it at." Mr Waters, a community figure who is recognised by everybody from the gardeners to the new director of Dounreay as he walks around his town, is passionate about Thurso. The town and its surrounds have a lot going for them from a tourist's point of view. There is John O' Groats along the road, and the beauty of the north-east coastal route could tempt many visitors. There is salmon fishing and a cluster of castles in the vicinity, including the Queen Mother's holiday home. But a town more than 100 miles north of Loch Ness needs more than that to survive. "You would have to go a long way to get closer to the edge than Thurso, more than 100 miles from the nearest city, Inverness. Its people know that their isolated position was a key reason for the siting of Dounreay. Newspaper reports of the day show that not much was said about the potential dangers while much was made of the economic benefits which duly transpired. With Dounreay came investment, hi-tech jobs, top-grade education and training, and a boom in Thurso's population. The UK Atomic Energy Authority invested £3.5 billion, including a housing estate in Thurso. The plant employed about 150 apprentices each year, as well as 60 junior administrative workers. As a testing ground for the most advanced technology, the nuclear plant spawned three reactors. Then there was the defence base, HMS Vulcan, curiously absent from pictures of Dounreay but an open secret in the area. There are two nuclear reactors there in the form of Trident submarine engines used by the navy for training.

Local people were loyal to the point of defensiveness after pressure groups claimed to have found a link between Dounreay and leukaemia cases in Thurso. So many jobs had been lost through mechanisation of farming and fishing, the two mainstays of the pre-1955 economy, that Doun-

reay was just too valuable to lose. Even the families of six childhood leukaemia cases refused to believe that the "Dounreay cluster", one of 43 identified in Scotland at that time, could be categorically linked to the jobs their parents did, according to Mr

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IL companies are required to decontaminate pipes and drilling equipment which become radioactive. The firms have to use recognised experts, which would include those at Dounreay. This aspect to its marketing campaign. A task-force has visited movers and shakers in places as diverse as Texas and the Faroe Islands. It has enlisted the help of Lord Thurso, a member of Scrabster's Harbour Trust, to oil the wheels at a meeting with American bosses at Claridge's in London. "We have got the gun cocked," said Falconer

**Quick Crossword No. 8195**

**Solution No. 8194**

**Across**  
1 Icy (7)  
8 Wealthy (7)  
9 River — point of no return (7)  
10 Dawdled (7)  
11 Seraglio (5)  
13 Declaration of aims (9)  
15 Inimicable (9)  
18 Stadium (5)  
21 Of vision (7)  
22 Free time (7)  
23 Nonsense! (7)  
24 Lock of hair (7)

**Down**  
1 Circumference (5)  
2 Fossil resin — approached with caution? (5)  
3 Deprived of outside contact (13)

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